

Governor Charles Baker  
Massachusetts State House  
Office of the Governor, Room 280  
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

[Date]

Dear Governor Baker,

We, the members of the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates, representing the 15 towns of Barnstable County write to you to express our grave concerns about the degraded Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant in Plymouth. We ask that in your role as chief safety officer of the Commonwealth you communicate with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission the importance of closing Pilgrim now to protect the citizens of Cape Cod.

In 2015, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) downgraded Pilgrim's performance to one of the three worst nuclear power plants in the country, declaring it one step away from a shutdown. We are aware that Entergy will be decommissioning Pilgrim in 2019, but despite a lengthy list of violations and unplanned shut downs it continues to operate. Over the past several months our concern about a potential radiological disaster at the plant has risen as we regularly learn of its myriad malfunctions.

Citizens of Cape Cod seem especially vulnerable to a radiological plume from Pilgrim because there is no evacuation plan for us, instead we would be told to shelter in place and await relocation to where?

In response to a question as to what the plan is for us post radiological disaster, MEMA director Kurt Swartz answered as follows:

"Over the next number of days, we would have mapped this area and once we had identified this area we would then issue a relocation order and order anyone within this area to leave the area. And we would enforce that order. *This is not an evacuation.* [emphasis added] An evacuation is an emergency quick get out of town order which says get in your car and get the hell out of town because there is an imminent danger. This is not an evacuation. This is a relocation." (Kurt Schwartz, Director of Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, comments to the Barnstable County Regional Emergency Planning Committee on Oct. 3, 2012).

In our collective opinion, this is an unrealistic plan. Even the rumor of an accident in Plymouth would send people to their cars in an attempt to get off the Cape rather than sheltering in place. This would cause chaos and traffic jams on our only evacuation route, Route Six, and at the other side of the bridges, preventing the southward or westward evacuation of those in the 10 mile emergency zone around Pilgrim.

In fact, it is shocking to know, should there be an actual emergency, the only access to Cape Cod, the two bridges, would be closed and NO ONE would be able to leave Cape Cod by car. This is totally unacceptable. A true disaster plan that protects the health and life of people on Cape Cod needs to be developed.

In addition to the public health and safety threat that the degraded Pilgrim plant poses, there is the looming threat of a major economic disaster for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. On Cape Cod, tourism and real estate are the major economic engines. Both could be severely impacted for years,

and house values would plummet should there be a radiological event at Pilgrim. Indeed Cape Cod towns could become uninhabitable and the economic losses would be incalculable.

In February of 2014, the Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission released a study outlining the disastrous economic consequences of a radiological event at Pilgrim. <sup>(1)</sup>

We have attached that paper for your review. Among its findings the report estimated that “a small-scale release of radioactive material at the plant could result in the loss of \$741 million to \$1.6 billion in tourist expenditures and \$23 million to \$63 million in state tax revenue over five years. A large scale disaster would likely increase the damage to \$2.2 to \$12.1 billion in tourist expenditure losses and cut overall economic output by \$45 to \$71 billion over 10 years”. The study further predicts that the effects of a radiological accident at Pilgrim “could contract the gross domestic product by up to 1.5%, possibly resulting in a recession.”

Recently we learned that the Massachusetts congressional delegation sent a letter to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) asking it to deny Entergy’s request for an extension for critical safety upgrades to the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station. These safety upgrades were recommended by a panel of Energy’s own engineers after the March 2011 disaster at Fukushima Daichi in Japan. Pilgrim is the same design as the reactors in Fukushima and subject to the same vulnerabilities. Signing the letter were Senators Edward J. Markey and Elizabeth Warren, and Reps. Michael E. Capuano, William R. Keating, Joseph P. Kennedy, III, Stephen F. Lynch, James P. McGovern, Seth Moulton, Richard Neal, Niki Tsongas.

To quote from their letter to NRC chairman Stephen Burns:

“Notwithstanding its intention to shut down the plant, Entergy has a paramount responsibility to minimize the risk of catastrophic accidents similar to the one that occurred at Fukushima, exempting Pilgrim from the NRC’s safety requirements would allow Entergy to abdicate that responsibility, unjustifiably exposing Massachusetts communities to danger.”

The facts show that neither Entergy nor the Nuclear Regulatory Commission have demonstrated any concern for our citizens. We need your leadership in demanding that the Pilgrim nuclear reactor is shut down now rather than allowed to operate in an unsafe manner. We also ask that a true disaster plan for Cape Cod is developed that puts the health and safety of the people first.

We thank you Governor for considering this serious matter and for communicating with us as to your results.

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Ronald Bergstrom, Speaker  
Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates

1. An Analysis of the Impact of Disaster at the Pilgrim Nuclear power Plant on the Economy of Cape Cod

[www.nps.gov/caco/parkmgmt/upload/PilgrimreportfinalV7.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/caco/parkmgmt/upload/PilgrimreportfinalV7.pdf)