

## PRESS RELEASE

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## **Entergy compromising safety and security and hiding dangerous financial losses**

VT/MA/NY—Watchdogs in three states told the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) recently that nuclear operator Entergy Nuclear should not be allowed to obscure financial problems at its struggling nuclear reactors because public safety is at stake. The groups reiterated their request that the nation's nuclear regulator enforce its rules and shut down reactors that do not earn enough revenue to cover operating expenses.

"Running an aging nuclear reactor is already risky business," said Jessica Azulay, program director of the Syracuse-based Alliance for a Green Economy, "but running an aging nuclear reactor on the cheap? That's just beyond irresponsible."

For over a year, groups in Vermont, Massachusetts and New York have been sounding the alarm over mounting evidence that Entergy is running the Vermont Yankee, Pilgrim and FitzPatrick reactors at a financial loss. In addition to providing the Nuclear Regulatory Commission with multiple analyses by financial analysts projecting shortfalls of millions of dollars at the reactors, the watchdogs have also pointed to symptoms of financial strain at the reactors.

In a petition first filed in March 2012 and in supplements that followed, the groups—Alliance for a Green Economy (New York), Citizens Awareness Network (Vermont, Massachusetts), Pilgrim Watch (Massachusetts), Vermont Citizens Action Network (Vermont)—point

out how Entergy has cut jobs at the reactors, delayed maintenance of key equipment, and shortchanged security. The petition is also supported by two national nuclear watchdog organizations, Nuclear Information and Resource Service and Beyond Nuclear.

**ALL MATERIALS (including supplements) FOR THE 2.206 PETITION CAN BE FOUND HERE:**

**<http://www.vtcitizen.org/petition.shtml>**

The latest manifestations of cost-cutting at Entergy's reactors, highlighted in the supplement of October 15th, include:

- higher than necessary radiation exposure to workers at the FitzPatrick reactor due to delayed replacement of the plant's condenser,
- whistleblower allegations that Entergy allowed financial considerations to override good practice in implementing a new perimeter monitoring system without adequate training for staff at Indian Point,
- Entergy's recent announcement that it may cut staff by 40% at the soon-to-be decommissioned Vermont Yankee reactor by 2016, despite the reactor's dangerous fuel pool remaining in operation until at least 2020,
- insufficient land-based security at Pilgrim Station, in which fifteen trespassing events have occurred on Pilgrim's owner-controlled property.

"Entergy's financial vulnerability is leading to it cutting corners to keep its shareholders happy; not so happy is its workforce losing their jobs, suffering intimidation, and undermining safety at its Northeast fleet of nukes." Deb Katz, Citizens Awareness Network.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has an enforcement tool to prevent nuclear companies from compromising safety in lean economic times. The "financial qualifications" regulation requires nuclear operators to show that they can continue to earn enough revenue to maintain operations, and gives the agency the authority to shut down reactors that cannot.

On June 2, 2014, as a result of the concerns brought by nuclear watchdogs, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission asked Entergy to voluntarily "provide updated cost and revenue projections and cash flow statements for Fitzpatrick and Pilgrim for the five year period of 2014-2019." In its response to that request, Entergy neither provided information about the profits and losses at its reactors nor a commitment from the parent company to cover shortfalls at its limited liability corporation (LLC) subsidiaries that own the reactors. Entergy was explicit that no such commitment has been made in the past or was being made.

In today's filing with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the watchdog groups ask the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to either compel Entergy to prove it is financially qualified to operate the reactors, or to use the publicly available information provided in their petition to determine that the reactors are out of compliance.

"Entergy cannot be allowed to avoid enforcement of the financial rules by hiding its information from the regulators and the public," said Tim Judson, Executive Director of NIRS. "Entergy has fought hard to avoid scrutiny of the financial situation at these aging reactors. It's time for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to get serious about protecting the public from this growing danger. Every day these reactors operate on the cheap is a day we live with an increased risk of a nuclear accident hanging over our heads."

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*Citizens Awareness Network is a grassroots environmental organization working to end the use of unaffordable and dangerous nuclear power in the Northeast and replace it with sustainable, reliable, and affordable energy generation. CAN envisions a future of safety, prosperity, and good health for all. [www.nukebusters.org](http://www.nukebusters.org)*

*The Nuclear Information and Resource Service is the information and networking center for citizens and environmental organizations concerned about nuclear power, radioactive waste, radiation, and sustainable energy We initiate large-scale organizing and public education campaigns on specific issues, such as preventing construction of new reactors, radioactive waste transportation,*

*deregulation of radioactive materials, and more. Our international programs and affiliation with WISE (World Information Service on Energy) means that our network spans more than a dozen offices and programs across the globe. [www.nirs.org](http://www.nirs.org)*

*Alliance for a Green Economy (AGREE) works for safe, affordable energy and the development of a green economy in New York State. Our goal is a prosperous, safe, and healthy New York, fulfilling the promise of conservation, energy efficiency, and safe, clean renewable energy sources to end our state's reliance on wasteful and environmentally destructive forms of energy. The Alliance works to promote this transition to a carbon-free and nuclear-free future and educates the public about alternatives that can revitalize the economy and safeguard human health and the environment. [www.allianceforagreenecconomy.org/](http://www.allianceforagreenecconomy.org/)*

*Pilgrim Watch is a grassroots organization that serves the public interest in issues regarding the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station in Plymouth, MA. <http://www.pilgrimwatch.org>*

LINKS:

Petition and all supplements and supporting materials available here:  
<http://www.vtcitizen.org/petition.shtml>

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