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Oral Presentation

Exposé oral

**Written submission from
Marit Stiles, MPP, Davenport**

**Mémoire de
Marit Stiles, députée, Davenport**

In the Matter of the

À l'égard de

**BWXT Nuclear Energy Canada Inc.,
Toronto and Peterborough Facilities**

**BWXT Nuclear Energy Canada Inc.,
installations de Toronto et Peterborough**

Application for the renewal of the licence for
Toronto and Peterborough facilities

Demande de renouvellement du permis pour les
installations de Toronto et Peterborough

Commission Public Hearing

Audience publique de la Commission

March 2 to 6, 2020

Du 2 au 6 mars 2020

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January 27, 2020

To the Commission Secretariat:

As the Member of Provincial Parliament for the riding of Davenport, I wish to request intervenor status in the licensing hearing for BWXT Nuclear Energy Canada Inc. (BWXT)'s application to renew its Class IB fuel facility operating licence for a period of 10 years. I am seeking to make a written and oral presentation during the hearings scheduled for March 2 and 3, 2020 in Toronto.

BWXT's facility at 1025 Lansdowne Avenue has been in operation, under different operators, for over 50 years. Yet for many who live in close proximity to the plant, their operations are unknown. When residents are made aware of the facility, as they have been again with this new licensing application, naturally there are a number of questions.

Residents have contacted me to ask about the safety measures at the facility, the environmental impact and whether they or their families are at a greater risk due to the nature of the manufacturing taking place there. Some have questioned why this type of facility is permitted in an urban area at all.

I was only elected in 2018, but I was familiar with the facility from the previous round of licensing hearings and of public concern about the facility. In 2013, many residents found out about the facility only through the media. When people began asking questions, they found out that the license had already been renewed for what was at the time, an unprecedented 10-year period. People mobilized around the issue and our MP and MPP at the time helped coordinate an information meeting and push for a re-opening of the license.

In December 2013, a Commission meeting on the status of the facility was held in Toronto.

What I learned from watching that process unfold, was that a lack of clear, proactive communication led to a breach of trust between the community, the regulator and former operator of the plant, GE-Hitachi. It was found that the company had failed to meet the requirements of its previous license to keep the public informed of their activities. There were also serious questions at that time about the Commission's failure to adequately engage our community in the process.

In this environment, it was difficult for people to find accurate information or get answers to simple questions about the facility and its impact on their lives. In the absence of that, misinformation and rumours helped create a sense of fear about the facility.

When I learned that the new operators of the plant, BWXT, were applying to renew the license for another 10 years, I had hoped that the lessons learned from 2013 would be taken into account. Finding out that the hearings would be held at a Dufferin Street and Highway 401 location was not an encouraging sign that the participation of our local community was valued.

On November 26, 2019, I wrote the President of the Commission to request that the hearing be moved closer to the Lansdowne and Dupont neighbourhood in order to make it as accessible as possible to residents most impacted by the plant. I am pleased to see that the Commission has decided to relocate the meeting.

In that letter, I noted that while our community has many industrial facilities in proximity to residential neighbourhoods, the nature of the production of uranium fuel components at this facility has raised concerns about the impact on public safety. While the Commission hosts significant numbers of reports and publications on its site, it can be difficult for people to get straightforward answers to basic questions like:

- Do the uranium particles emitted from the facility pose a risk to my health, or the health of my children?
- What precautions are in place to prevent an accident where uranium is released in a greater amount into the environment?
- What risks are posed by the proximity to a busy rail line that sees toxic and flammable substances passing through daily?
- What are the impacts on the environment?

At a recent information session hosted by the Commission, I learned the answers to some of these questions, but I was surprised that some questions still could not be answered. This was the only opportunity for residents to get in-person answers to their questions, and though there was a great deal of expertise in the room, participants told me they left with still more questions. It shouldn't have to be this way.

Residents living in close proximity to the facility have also raised concerns about accountability and transparency. While some acknowledge BWXT's improved communications from the pre-2010 period, many feel the company needs to take additional steps to ensure all neighbours remain well informed and engaged.

While I have been pleased to meet with a representative of BWXT at Queen's Park during an industry information day, we are disappointed that there has been no regular communication or information about community engagement events. Unfortunately this means my office is unable to share up to date information with constituents.

Many nearby residents have asked how they can become involved with the community liaison committee, and remain confused about the process for how members are selected.

Our community has consistently made it clear that they expect transparency and communication from BWXT on the operations of this facility, and we expect our federal regulator to ensure, without a doubt, that public safety takes precedence in any licensing decision.

By the time the hearing happens, many residents will still be just finding out about this facility. As such, I want to present on behalf of my community to share the concerns of those who could not register before the January 27 deadline and to reinforce the need for greater communication and proactive disclosure of safety information and emergency preparedness.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this application to appear.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marit Stiles', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marit Stiles, MPP
Davenport