FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Michigan for Nuclear Decommissioning Safety

Public Panel Would Keep An Eye On Decommissioning At Michigan Nuclear Plants

House bill calls for Michigan citizens to monitor procedures as nuclear power plants close.

SOUTH HAVEN, MI, January 23 – Michigan House Bill 5377, introduced Tuesday, January 22, by State Representative Jon Hoadley (D-Kalamazoo) and nine cosponsors, would create a Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel (NDCAP) of Michigan residents and others. Hoadley’s bill responds to citizen concerns about safeguarding the dismantling of our nuclear power plants and the safe handling and storage of low-level and high-level nuclear waste. Decommissioning a nuclear plant always demands careful attention to safety, but catastrophic erosion along Lake Michigan’s shoreline has created an especially worrisome situation for Palisades, the state’s next nuclear plant scheduled for decommissioning.

The waste that Palisades Nuclear Generating Plant has created, and continues to generate over several decades of operation, will be dangerous for millions of years. It must be stored safely and permanently. This deadly material is likely to be stored temporarily, or perhaps permanently, at Palisades. Sierra Club member and Michigan Safe Energy Future-Shoreline Chapter representative Bette Pierman said, “Decommissioning a nuclear plant is a complicated and risky process. Safe dismantling can take years or decades and cost millions of dollars — more time and money than it took to build the plant. It is important for us as citizens to be involved in every step to assure a safe decommissioning for all of us.”

A majority of NDCAP members would be citizens who live within 50 miles of a decommissioning plant. Included on the panel would be representatives of local and tribal governments, environmental organizations, nuclear plant operators, and others. (See a full list at this link to Representative Hoadley’s bill: https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2019-2020/billintroduced/House/htm/2020-HIB-5377.htm)

Michigan Safe Energy Future and Sierra Club’s Southwest Michigan Group encourage Palisades’ neighbors and other citizens to contact their State Representatives and Senators, strongly urging them to co-sponsor, support, and vote for the NDCAP, HB 5377. Every nuclear plant in operation will be decommissioned eventually, so we urge neighbors of all nuclear plants to apply for membership on the panel once the bill passes and the application process is publicized.

Michigan Safe Energy Future and Sierra Club strongly support Representative Hoadley’s NDCAP bill. We are convinced that other local and state environmental and conservation organizations will join us in urging Michigan’s legislators to send this bill to Governor Whitmer for her signature. Passage of this bill would protect Michigan’s land, air, water, the diverse flora and fauna that we all enjoy, and — most important — the health of the people of Michigan, the Great Lakes area, and the U.S.

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