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Comments before the NC Utilities Commission IRP HEARING in Charlotte, NC 2/28/13

Duke Energy's proposed nuclear power plant, William States Lee III is just over the border in Gaffney, SC just 60 miles from Asheville. It has NOT been officially licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission because the federal court halted all new licenses until an appropriate environmental impact statement concerning the disposal of nuclear waste is found acceptable.

But Duke is allowed to move irresponsibly forward with an expensive, dangerous endeavor.

Nearly half a billion in consumer dollars has already been allocated to WS Lee:

\$319 Million in South Carolina

At least.....\$160 Million in North Carolina

The current Progress IRP suggests Progress plans a major 20% buy-in by 2023. It also makes a small investment in the 2 reactors added to the VC Summer Plant in South Carolina. With these investments and the existing nuclear power stations, downtown Charlotte will be within 70 miles of 10 nuclear reactors. Is it worth the safety and economical risk?

A 2012 study conducted by Synapse Energy Economics showed that the addition of the Lee Nuclear Station alone, without the other plants Duke Energy is planning, could raise rates by 40% or more.

And if we take a look at the cost overruns and construction delays at the new reactor installations in South Carolina, Florida and Georgia, it is obvious the LEE nuclear plant's estimated construction costs of \$24 billion will only increase through its 10 or more years of construction time. Let's not forget ratepayers are liable for the cost even if the plant stops construction and never produces an ounce of electricity.

Even though the NC coast has enough wind power equal to 20 nuclear power plants, Duke wind investments are in other states, where electricity customers cannot be forced to pay up front for high-risk nuclear power projects.

As a customer, I feel misrepresented and betrayed.

As a mother and grandmother, speaking for our children....I am sad and appalled.

This is 9 year old Katarou from Fukushima, Japan. Like most of his friends, he goes to school and plays outside with a mask to cover his nose and mouth and his radiation monitor is worn around his neck.

Parents and children who survived the nuclear disaster in Fukushima live under a constant shadow of fear because 44% of the 96,000 children tested have thyroid cysts and nodules due to radiation exposure. The chance of cancer in their future is likely.

One of the defense lawyers for the Fukushima Collective Evacuation Trial (Kenichi Ido, former judge) said: "Under the current situation, I think the children of Fukushima may fall into a situation like that of the children of Ukraine and Belarus, where only 20% of the children are considered healthy. Such a danger exists in Fukushima."

He is speaking of the children who are affected by radiation and chemicals from the Chernobyl nuclear accident over 100 miles from Belarus where children born since 1986 are affected by a 200 **percent increase in birth defects and a 250 percent increase in congenital birth deformities.**

I ask you again. Is nuclear power worth the risk? Please honor all children. No one deserves to be sacrificed to turn the lights on.
Radiation has no boundaries.

Nuclear power is expensive and dangerous with nowhere to put the waste.
Stop making it.
Go solar, wind and efficiency. It's the right thing to do!

Thank you,

Laura Sorensen speaking for myself
And on behalf of SAFE Carolinas