



OPEN LETTER to Treasury Board from women leaders

Funding for new nuclear reactors is a serious mistake that blocks swift action on climate change

Dear Mr. Duclos and Members of the Treasury Board:

On September 21, 2020 we wrote to you as women who are Indigenous and non-Indigenous community leaders in science, medicine, law and environmental protection to ask you to stop funding new nuclear reactors. Canada is a member of an international nuclear waste treaty and has a legal obligation to minimize generation of radioactive waste. Federal funding for new nuclear reactors would be an abnegation of this treaty obligation.

Today we are joined by women colleagues from all provinces and territories in Canada and several Indigenous communities. We strongly urge you to reject new nuclear reactors, called "SMRs." They are being promoted to your government as a silver bullet to address the climate emergency. This is a false notion.

In fact, **SMRs prevent swift, effective action to address the climate emergency.** SMRs are many years away from production. They would take far too long to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They suck money and attention away from inexpensive low-carbon technologies that are ready to deploy now.

Solar and wind power are already the cheapest and fastest-growing electricity sources in the world. A 2018 Deloitte report, "Global Renewable Energy Trends: Solar and Wind Move from Mainstream to Preferred" concluded: "Solar and wind power recently crossed a new threshold, moving from mainstream to preferred energy sources across much of the globe". The report noted that solar and wind power enhance electrical grids. It also pointed out that intermittency is no longer a concern owing to rapid advances in storage technology. Canada should fund much wider deployment of solar and wind power.

Yours sincerely,

Alma H. Brooks, Wolastoqew and Eastern Wabanaki
Chief April Adams-Phillips, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne
Candycye Paul, English River First Nation
Ellen Gabriel, Mohawks of Kanehsatà:ke
Eriel Deranger, Member of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Treaty 8
Hilu Tagoona, BA, Qairimuiut Inuk
Dr. Imelda Perley Opolahsomuwehs, Neqotuk First Nation
Lorraine Rekmans, Serpent River First Nation
Dr. Lynn Gehl, PhD, Algonquin - Pikwakanagan First Nation
Mary Alice Smith, BA, Metis Cree, Robinson-Superior Treaty area, Longbow Lake
Mary Lou Smoke, Anishinawbe Kwe, Bear Clan
Neecha Dupuis, Ojibwa Nation of SAULGEE Indian Tribe No. 258
Renee Abram, Oneida First Nation of the Thames
Serena Kenny, Lac Seul First Nation
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Anne Lindsay, Order of Manitoba, MA, Winnipeg, MB
Dr. Auréa Cormier, PhD, Order of Canada, Moncton, NB
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Beatrice Olivastro, Ottawa, ON
Betty L. E. Wilcox, BA, BEd, Stanhope, PE
Brenda Brochu, BA, BEd, Peace River, AB
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Chantal Levert, Montréal, QC
Dr. Charlotte Rigby, PhD, Gatineau, QC
Chris Cavan, BEd, Almonte, ON
Diane Fortin, Gatineau, QC
Dr. Dale Dewar, MD, Wynyard, SK
Dr. Darlene Hammell, MD, Victoria, BC
Deborah Powell, BA, BEd, Bristol, ON
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Elssa Martinez, MSW, Montreal, QC
Emma March, MA, JD candidate, Kingston, ON
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Eva Schacherl, MA, Ottawa, ON
Evelyn Gigantes, BA, former MPP, Ottawa, ON
Gail Wylie, Fredericton, NB
Gini Dickie, BA, Toronto, ON
Gracia James, OMC, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON
Ginette Charbonneau, Physicist, Oka, QC
Gretchen Fitzgerald, BSc, Halifax, NS
Janet Graham, MA, Ottawa, ON
Dr. Janet Ray, MD, Victoria, BC
Dr. Janice Harvey, PhD, Fredericton, NB
Jean Swanson, Order of Canada, BA, Vancouver, BC

More funding for energy efficiency and energy conservation would also be a much better use of tax dollars than handouts to the nuclear industry. The 2018 report presented by the Generation Energy Council to Canada's Minister of Natural Resources found that: "Canada's greatest opportunities to save money, cut greenhouse gas emissions and create jobs can be found in slashing energy waste. **Fully one-third of our Paris emissions commitment could be achieved by improving energy efficiency.**"

We urge you to say "no" to the nuclear industry that is asking for billions of dollars in taxpayer funds to subsidize a dangerous, highly-polluting and expensive technology that we don't need. Instead, put more money into renewables, energy efficiency and energy conservation. This will create many thousands of jobs and quickly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We must never forget that the main product of nuclear reactors — in terms of planetary impact — is deadly, radioactive poisons that remain hazardous to all life on earth for hundreds of thousands of years. The electricity they produce for a few short decades is but a minor by-product. There is no proven safe method for keeping radioactive waste out of the environment of living things for hundreds of thousands of years.

We urge you to bring this matter to the attention of your Cabinet colleagues, and stop all government support and taxpayer funding for so-called small modular nuclear reactors.

Jean Brereton, Golden Lake, ON
Dr. Jeannie Rosenberg, MD, Huntingdon, QC
Jessica Spencer, Moncton, NB
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