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Fermi 2 License Extension
State Representative Dale Zorn, 56th District
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Good evening.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you this evening.

My name is Dale W. Zorn and I have had for the past several years the honor representing the residents and businesses of the 56th District in the Michigan House of Representatives.

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I have no doubt that the Commission will hear from many Monroe County residents on this matter. The vast majority of those comments, I believe, will be supportive of the license renewal.

I would like to add my own perspective for the record.

Like many of the individuals from whom you will hear as the NRC considers the 20-year extension, I am a lifelong Monroe County resident and a small business person. My Father, opened the business in 1953, and my brother and I took the business over in 1978.

I have also been fortunate to have an "insider's" view of Monroe County's history and development as it unfolded over the years and decades.

My background includes 10 years in local elective office with Raisinville Township, 20 years as a Monroe County Commissioner and, for the past 3 1/2 years as a state representative.

While a county commissioner, I lead the reorganization of the Monroe County Economic Development Corporation and created the "Monroe First" program to assist existing and new business development in the county.

The term "Monroe First" is especially important in the context of this matter and I hope the Commission will give extra credence to the views and perspectives offered by residents of this region.

Additionally, I was the Chief Executive of the Monroe County Emergency Operations Center having extensive training in emergency services (such as Fermi drills and exercises) and experience in actual emergency events such as the Comair Airline accident in 1997.

My perspective is shaped by my experiences as Fermi 1 and Fermi 2 were built and operated. They brought waves of investment, new development and growth to this county.

I have seen Detroit Edison and DTE Energy responsibly manage the construction and operation of the plants. In the case of Fermi 1, I have also been witness to its decommissioning.

I have also witnessed DTE Energy's stewardship of the both the Fermi complex and its Monroe Power Plant property.

By virtue of my responsibilities as a local elected official I have been fortunate to have been afforded a special view of these facilities.

In addition to safely generating more than 190 million megawatts of electricity which is about 20 percent of the total of DTE Energy's generating capacity, it employs 850 full-time employees and hundreds of supplemental contract workers.

Throughout the years, DTE Energy has proven to be an environmental friendly neighbor that has taken an active part to protect our natural resources and to improve the quality of our environment.

DTE has exemplified itself by successfully completing the ISO 14001 international standard for environmental quality management in both the Fermi II and Monroe Power Plant operations; has received the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) coveted Michigan Voluntary Protection Program, the Star Award while working over five-million safe hours; it was designated a Clean Corporate Citizen from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality; is a dedicated supporter of the Downriver International Wildlife Refuge; and was awarded the Wildlife site of the year from Wildlife Habit Council.

Let us not forget the proud tradition of community service by the DTE Energy Foundation and the DTE employees that fulfill public improvement projects such as Wildlife Habitats, United Way of Monroe County, Habitat for Humanity, the Lotus Garden Club, The American Red Cross, local public schools, Salvation Army, and Relay for Life, and other community projects.

There is no doubt that Fermi 2 is a significant economic asset to Monroe County and all of Southeast Michigan.

Like all U.S. nuclear plants, Fermi 2 was originally licensed to operate for 40 years, which reflects the capital amortization period utilized by most utilities rather than the expected operational life of the plant.

In short, Fermi 2 has many more useful years ahead of it if the NRC approves DTE license renewal application as it has for more than 70 other nuclear units.

Michigan has a well rounded energy portfolio which includes natural gas, hydroelectric, coal, and nuclear power. And in more recent years, solar and wind renewables has made its way into the Michigan energy portfolio. The Michigan renewable energy production is on track to meet a state mandate goal of 10% by 2015.

Wind energy has been the primary source of renewable energy in Michigan. At the end of 2013, more than 1,100 MW of utility-scale wind projects were in operation in Michigan.

Michigan's wind generation is expected to increase to more than 1,400 MW by the end of 2014.

However, renewables are not expected to meet base load energy demands and with six expected coal plant closings in the state due to federal emission requirements, it is essential to Michigan, especially Southeast Michigan to foster an energy program that will meet the needs of the region without going outside of the state to purchase electricity.

There is one last thought that I wish for you to take back to Washington.

Expanding America's nuclear energy industry is vital to meeting a growing electricity demand, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing U.S. energy security.

Developing advanced technologies and ensuring that there is a sustainable used fuel management policy is an important part of America's nuclear energy future.

Under its own Federal law, and after collecting \$10 billion from rate payers, the Federal government has failed its own policy to develop a disposal facility for used fuel from the nation's nuclear power plants and high-level radioactive waste from U.S. defense programs.

The law set a 1998 deadline for the federal government to begin accepting used fuel, but it has not done so.

In 1987, Congress directed DOE to study Yucca Mountain, Nev.—a remote desert location—as the site for a potential repository for geologic disposal of used nuclear fuel.

Extensive study by leading scientists from around the world demonstrated that the site is suitable and, in 2002, Congress approved the site. DOE submitted a license application to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in 2008 to build a repository at the site.

However, in 2010 the Obama administration announced plans to terminate the Yucca Mountain project and nothing has happened since, except to continue to put local American communities at risk.

I have had the opportunity to visit Yucca Mountain twice during the construction and research phase. I am not a nuclear engineer, but after being there, after extensive personal research and lobbying Congress to take control of nuclear waste, I am convinced a disposal site such as Yucca Mountain will provide a safe storage environment and, as I believe someday, maybe not in my day, but in the future there will be a use for the stored waste and it could be retrieved to benefit our country. To me, it is a reusable energy product.

I encourage the Commission to move expeditiously through the review process and approve the requested license extension.

As I have commented in earlier proceedings involving the application for a construction and operating license for a new unit at the Fermi Complex, I believe that nuclear energy is critical to Michigan's energy portfolio.

Again, thank you for this opportunity.