

I have been informed by representatives of the Consumers Power Company that your Commission has or may consider interrupting the operating licensing review process for the Midland Nuclear Power Plant now being carried out by staff of the NRC. I understand that the interruption is based on staffing limitations, and is not related to safety issues. Apparently, NRC staff believe such a delay would be without adverse impact and is based on staff analysis that the plant will not be completed on schedule. However, Consumers Power indicates that the proposed plant will be completed as scheduled and a licensing interruption would significantly delay plant operation. If the latter is the case, such action would add considerably to the overall cost of construction and would increase later costs of electrical power to ratepayers.

Although I am aware the NRC and its staff are under a considerable present-time burden, I urge you to reconsider your evidence in this matter. I believe it would be beneficial to all parties if you would instruct your staff to review their assessment of the Midland operating schedule, including an investigation with the Company and an inspection of the plant and its records, before any action on this matter is taken by your Commission. If NRC staffing limits will cause licensing delays, my concern is that best available evidence be employed in the allocation of resources.

I thank you for your consideration.

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Daniel J. Demlow, Chairman
Michigan Public Service Commission