

From: Catherine Puma <Catherine.Puma.473618966@p2a.co>
Sent: Wednesday, October 20, 2021 4:53 PM
To: NRC-EJReview Resource
Subject: [External_Sender] The NRC must do better on Environmental Justice

To Whom it May Concern,

I am asking the NRC to expand and enhance their consideration of environmental justice in all aspects of agency decision-making. Environmental justice means fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. It means providing both procedural and substantive protections.

The NRC's mission requires the agency to consider and address environmental justice more fully and deeply. The NRC's mission is to "license and regulate the Nation's civilian use of radioactive materials to provide reasonable assurance of adequate protection of public health and safety and to promote the common defense and security and to protect the environment." Providing protection of public health and safety must include ensuring that the most vulnerable communities are not disproportionately impacted.

In an executive order, President Biden directed that agencies make environmental justice part of their missions. In doing so, the NRC must follow the Biden Administrations' promise to deliver on environmental justice. The NRC should take this opportunity to update the agency's Commission Policy Statement on the Treatment of Environmental Justice. The NRC's statement should embrace the basic principles of environmental justice, which means fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of their background, concerning the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

The NRC should also create an environmental justice committee to develop an inclusive process that recognizes and hears from impacted communities. The NRC should expand the application of environmental justice beyond the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NRC must improve how it analyses environmental justice in its NEPA reviews. Simply disclosing the demographics and socioeconomic makeup of an affected community is not sufficient to satisfy environmental justice requirements under NEPA. Furthermore, NEPA is not the only applicable to environmental justice concerns. The Atomic Energy Act has health and safety sections that encompass environmental justice.

Thank you for your attention,

Regards,
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