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Duke Energy Corporation; Belews Creek Early Site Permit Application

Comment On: NRC-2025-2161-0007
Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC; Belews Creek, North Carolina Site, Early Site Permit, Notice of Intent To Conduct Scoping Process and Prepare Environmental Impact Statement

Document: NRC-2025-2161-DRAFT-0053
Comment on FR Doc # 2026-08155, NRC-2025-2161-0007, from Brandon Burgess

Submitter Information

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General Comment

Dear U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission,

I am writing in support of Duke Energy's Early Site Permit application for potential new nuclear development near the Belews Creek Steam Station in Stokes County, N.C.

I have lived in this local community for 30 years and worked at the Belews Creek Steam Station for 20 years. I started as a contractor in material handling and worked my way up to operations manager. My wife has also lived in Stokes County her entire life and teaches at Walnut Cove Elementary School. We have three children with our oldest recently graduating from South Stokes High School. Our family has deep roots in this community, and we care about its future.

For more than 50 years, Belews Creek Steam Station has been an important part of Stokes County. Today, we produce 2,220 megawatts of energy and employ over 130 people as one of the area's largest employers and taxpayers. Though the station is scheduled to retire in the late 2030s, I believe the site is well positioned to continue serving customers. Having access to cooling water and transmission, the site is a perfect fit for new generation. With Duke Energy already owning the property, repurposing the Belews Creek site makes sense for employees, the local community and customers. Duke Energy can build on its existing investments rather than starting from scratch elsewhere, helping to reduce costs while preserving the economic and community benefits that the station has provided for decades.

Just as important as the physical characteristics of the site is the workforce that already exists here. The employees at Belews Creek have decades of experience operating and maintaining complex energy infrastructure, working across operations, maintenance, engineering and other disciplines to keep our station running safely and reliably. One of the things I value most about Belews Creek is our culture. We

are a close-knit team, a family, who supports each other. As coal generation retires, many employees are thinking about what comes next. New nuclear development would provide a pathway for our skilled workers to transition their careers and continue doing the work they love while supporting their families and serving customers.

To me, this project is about stability and opportunity. It is about making sure families can continue to put food on the table, plan for the future and build careers close to home. It is also about creating opportunities for the next generation. I spend a great deal of time working with local high schools and community colleges because I believe young people need to know that rewarding energy careers are available right here in Stokes County. A new nuclear facility would help retain the skilled workforce we already have and provide a pathway for students who want to pursue a technical career without leaving the community where they grew up.

I believe this project represents an opportunity to build on the Belews Creek Steam Station's legacy of service while creating a strong future for employees, customers and the communities that depend on us.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

Brandon Burgess

Stokes County Resident and Operations Manager at Belews Creek Steam Station