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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Kurt Schwartz, Co-Chair
Sean Mullin, Co-Chair
Massachusetts Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel
c/o MA Emergency Management Agency
400 Worcester Road
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Dear Chairs:

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the decommissioning of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station (PNPS). I applaud the panel for its work over the past year in bringing to light the many aspects of decommissioning that will impact residents all across Massachusetts.

It should be noted that the planned decommissioning of PNPS is part of a nationwide trend. In the ten-year period between 2013 and 2023, approximately 17 nuclear plants are likely to have ceased energy generation operations. Communities coast-to-coast are facing the same challenges – the safety and security of the plant as its transitions to decommissioning and dismantlement; the long-term fate of spent nuclear fuel; the decline in low-carbon electricity generation and how to make up for it; the eventual decline in high-wage union jobs at the plant; and the need to restore the property to community usefulness. Communities facing similar challenges can and should collaborate, sharing best practices to encourage safety and prosperity during the decommissioning and site restoration processes. The economic pressures causing plants to close are clear, but local communities should not be left alone to face the economic and health risks posed by decommissioning and dismantlement. The model of this panel and its mission can be replicated across the nation as additional states and communities face these same challenges.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I am very engaged on cyberdefense policy to ensure our country, our critical infrastructure, and our nuclear plants are safe from cyberattacks. Entergy must remain vigilant to ensure that the Pilgrim station is protected from cyber intrusion of any kind. Given the NRC's decision last December to waive the requirement that Entergy complete all eight cyber-security milestones at Pilgrim prior to the announced closure date of the plant, and given the fact that the cyber-security standards were set in 2009, nine years during which the nature and frequency of cyber-attacks on American infrastructure have only worsened, it is incumbent upon the NRC to work with federal intelligence agencies to share information and develop more rigorous cyber-security protocols that reflect the latest technological advances in cyber-protection.

Even when Pilgrim enters the decommissioning phase, the site will still be home to vital security systems, spent fuel, and dry casks. We know spent fuel remains an area of concern and local communities must continue to be protected as long as spent fuel remains on-site. That is why Entergy and the NRC must work in collaboration with other expert partners at the Department of Energy, the Department of Homeland Security, and the relevant agencies to ensure Pilgrim's physical security and cybersecurity systems operate at the highest possible standards. Robust cybersecurity standards crafted to reflect the best available information on current and future threats and minimize those risks should not be compromised. Uniform standards are set for a reason and that uniformity should not be undermined.

On the House Homeland Security Committee, Republicans and Democrats work together to improve our country's cybersecurity capabilities. Last month I voted for and the House passed H.R. 5074, *the Department of Homeland Security Cyber Incident Response Teams Act*. This bipartisan bill would require DHS's national cybersecurity and communications integration center to maintain cyber hunt and incident response teams to provide assistance in a variety of areas. For example, these cyber response teams would assist asset owners and operators in restoring services following a cyber incident, identify cybersecurity risk and unauthorized cyber activity, and provide mitigation strategies to prevent, deter, and protect against cybersecurity risks.

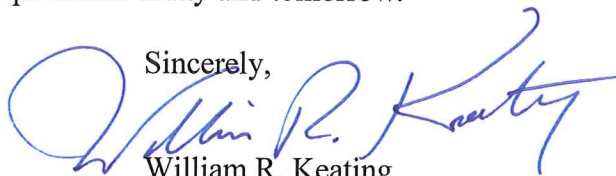
The recent omnibus funding bill, signed into law by the President, provides financial support for important energy security and safety programs, including \$100 million for cybersecurity to protect our electric grid and energy infrastructure. Given the recent efforts by Russian hackers to penetrate the American electric grid, it is vitally important that we dedicate increased resources to step up our vigilance against these malicious attacks.

Additionally, earlier this year, I also re-introduced the Nuclear Plant Decommissioning Act along with Senator Sanders and Congressman Welch of Vermont. The bill would ensure states and local communities have meaningful roles in the development and approval of reactor shutdown plans and post-shutdown license transfers. It is the people who live or work in the community hosting a nuclear power plant who truly understand the effects of decommissioning. This legislation gives them a voice.

Any potential sale of the Pilgrim, even after it shuts down, would be a matter of significant and legitimate concern in Plymouth and throughout the region. Those concerns deserve to be treated respectfully. State officials and municipal leaders should be consulted before any such sale proceeds. The need to keep the community informed and involved does not end when a plant ceases generating electricity. Stakeholder engagement should continue throughout the decommissioning process.

Hundreds of thousands of residents and thousands of local Pilgrim staff appreciate that full decommissioning of the station and complete restoration of the site will take many years. We must ensure that these complex tasks are done safely, skillfully, and completely so that the Plymouth community is economically and environmentally protected today and tomorrow.

Sincerely,



William R. Keating
Member of Congress