

**State of New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
Draft Energy Master Plan Stakeholder Meetings**

**Comments for the Record
Nuclear Energy Institute**

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My name is Mary Pietrzyk and I am the Director of Stakeholder Strategy and Engagement at the Nuclear Energy Institute. I would like to thank Chairman Fiordaliso, the BPU Commissioners and staff, and the Energy Master Plan Committee for the opportunity to share my comments today.

Governor Murphy should be commended for his leadership and vision to achieve steep reductions in emissions and establish New Jersey as a leader in the clean energy economy. The Energy Master Plan Committee has drafted a comprehensive plan to achieve that vision. The goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2050 means aggressive actions must be taken in a number of sectors, including electricity generation and transportation. In defining the goal as 100 percent clean, the Governor is recognizing the immense contribution that nuclear energy brings in achieving emissions reductions. This draft plan joins a clear consensus emerging both in the states and nationally that nuclear energy is essential for rapid decarbonization.

Nuclear energy currently supplies a little over 30 percent of New Jersey's electricity generation. But nuclear provides more than 90 percent of the state's non-emitting electricity. If we think of the Salem and Hope Creek plants as a single site, that site is the largest generator of carbon-free electricity east of the Rockies. Salem and Hope Creek avoid almost 14 million tons of carbon dioxide every year. That is equivalent to the emissions from all the cars in the state. Nuclear is a vital component for New Jersey's decarbonization efforts in the electricity sector.

The New Jersey plants are economic engines for their communities and the state. They provide baseload power that runs around the clock, every day, under all weather conditions, to provide reliable electricity to the state's homes and businesses. Their continued operation keeps electricity prices low for the customers of New Jersey. The Energy Master Plan notes the economic benefits of in-state generation, including nuclear. Like most nuclear plants in the country, Salem and Hope Creek are located in a rural area of the state and directly employ around 1,600 people. A nuclear plant provides tens of millions of dollars toward the local tax base, providing funding for schools, firehouses and police stations. Nationally, nuclear plant worker salaries are 36 percent higher than the average local salary.

In 2018, lawmakers in Trenton acknowledged the environmental benefit of electricity provided by nuclear when they established the zero-emission certificate program through legislation. The ZEC values the non-emitting attribute provided by the state's nuclear plants, thereby allowing nuclear to continue to serve as the backbone of efforts to improve the state's air quality. In doing so, New Jersey joined a vanguard of states that have recognized the vital role that nuclear energy plays in a clean energy future.

And the role of nuclear must continue as New Jersey pursues the ambitious actions outlined in the Energy Master Plan. To achieve deep decarbonization, large sectors like transportation will have to be rapidly electrified. Nuclear energy ensures that electric vehicles run on emission-free energy to serve as

a truly clean alternative. Increased electrification will need a concert of nuclear energy, wind and solar working together to meet the economic needs of New Jersey. And the technology inclusive approach outlined in this plan will maximize the clean energy resources in New Jersey.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I commend New Jersey for recognizing the importance of nuclear energy to achieving deep decarbonization.