THE HONORABLE JUDD GREGG
NUCLEAR MATTERS ADVOCACY COUNCIL MEMBER;
FORMER U.S. SENATOR AND GOVERNOR, NEW HAMPSHIRE

WRITTEN COMMENT: ENERGY MASTER PLAN

I am Judd Gregg, former United States Senator and former Governor of New Hampshire, and a current member of the Nuclear Matters Advocacy Council. I am grateful for the opportunity to share my perspective on New Jersey's Board of Public Utilities' proposed Energy Master Plan.

I commend the BPU for its approach to developing a plan that sets New Jersey on the fastest and smartest path to zero emissions. Accelerating the deployment of clean energy resources, maximizing energy efficiency and modernizing the grid are all important tenets of the state's efforts to decarbonize by 2050.

However, if New Jersey hopes to achieve significant reductions in emissions by 2050 – including zero emissions in the power sector – this Energy Master Plan must be grounded in tech inclusive strategies that properly value New Jersey's largest and most reliable source of clean energy: carbon-free nuclear energy.

I have testified across the country and in New Jersey about the importance of America's nuclear plants. Nuclear energy could not be more critical to the success of New Jersey's decarbonization efforts. Today, nuclear plants provide more than 90 percent of New Jersey's carbon-free energy, and more than 38 percent of the state's overall energy.

An IHS Markit study released in 2017 and sponsored by Nuclear Matters details the reality that New Jersey needs nuclear energy now more than ever. If the state were to ever lose their nuclear power plants, it would result in a less resilient power supply, a decrease in economic activity in the state and more volatile and higher consumer power bills. In fact, the IHS Markit study found that losing nuclear energy could result in approximately $400 million in higher electricity costs and a decrease of more than $800 million in New Jersey GDP.

Further, as the report points out, premature nuclear power plant retirements cause a greater reliance on natural gas–fired generation. This would result in a net increase in CO2, SO2, and NOX emissions from power generation of 13 million metric tons (MMt), 3,063 metric tons, and 118 metric tons, respectively, with an environmental impact cost of more than $530 million per year. That is more than $1.7 billion dollars per year in economic, environmental and electricity benefits for the consumers of New Jersey.

The IHS Markit study concludes that New Jersey benefits from a diverse portfolio that includes nuclear power. It is important to remember the critical role nuclear energy can play for a single state and an entire region. Nuclear power provides high-paying jobs and long-term energy security, with a 60-year life for nuclear power stations and low operating costs. Nuclear energy is affordable and predictable in cost because there is little fluctuation in production costs and the average fuel price is more economical compared to other energy sources.

When nuclear plants prematurely close, there are dire impacts beyond the simple loss of power. I can speak from firsthand experience. In 2014, the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant – just across the state line from my home state of New Hampshire – shuttered its doors for good. The economic and environmental impacts of the closure were swift and significant.

Vermont Yankee was an asset that benefited three states, contributing over $60 million to the local economy each year through financial contributions, taxes paid, and employee involvement. The nuclear plant saved New England customers (in Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts) about $330 million in electricity rate savings versus purchasing the same power from the spot market between 2002 and its closure.

Hundreds of jobs were lost - jobs that have not come back in towns that have been devastated. Small businesses are feeling the crunch the most, with reports as high as 20% in lost revenues. In addition, $58 million in payroll per year is no longer paid to the over 500 people Vermont Yankee once employed. We're talking about irrevocable, long-lasting damage done to surrounding communities – and that's before you consider the environmental impacts.

According to the 2015 ISO New England Electric Generator Air Emissions Report, the loss of Vermont Yankee increased the use of natural gas- and oil-fired generation, which drove an increase in carbon dioxide emissions in 2015 compared with 2014. This increase in emissions has a direct impact on the health of citizens – especially minorities and low-income communities.

This is not an isolated occurrence. Without nuclear energy, air quality diminishes, harmful emissions increase, and hardworking citizens are laid off.

There is no doubt New Jersey's Energy Master Plan is on the right track, and I applaud the BPU for seeking to develop a plan that emphasizes increased investment in clean energy solutions, energy efficiency and grid modernization. New Jersey has always relied on a diverse portfolio of energy sources to meet the energy needs of its residents

and businesses. As the state seeks to increase its carbon-free power sources, I urge you to support New Jersey's largest source of clean power: carbon-free nuclear energy.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on this important plan.

Background: Nuclear Matters is a national coalition of more than 17,000 members across the country that works to inform and educate the public and stakeholders about the clear benefits of nuclear energy. Together we support solutions that properly value nuclear energy as a reliable, affordable, safe and carbon-free electricity resource that is essential to America's energy future.