

NEWS FROM NIRS

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WHY IS U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ADVOCATING FOR NUCLEAR PROJECT OWNED BY FRENCH GOVERNMENT?

Today, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce issued a report it calls Project No Project, which purports to identify “The Potential Economic Impact of Permitting Challenges Facing Proposed Energy Projects.” The intent of the report appears to be to garner support to end public participation and speed licensing of major energy projects. For Maryland, the Chamber chose to highlight the proposed Calvert Cliffs-3 nuclear reactor project.

“The Calvert Cliffs-3 reactor proposal is indeed stalled,” said Michael Mariotte, executive director of Nuclear Information and Resource Service, “but that’s of its own making. Not only would this \$10 Billion+ reactor be economic suicide for any entity that chose to try to build it, but it is patently illegal. It is entirely owned by the French government, through its state-owned utility Electricite de France. Not only that, but the reactor itself would be supplied by another French government entity, the state-owned Areva. U.S. law prohibits foreign ownership of a U.S. reactor project.”

“We find it ironic that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce would go to bat for a French government project where all the profits (in the unlikely event there were any) would go immediately to France, rather than any U.S. companies, or, for that matter, members of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. It appears that in its zeal to promote dirty, dangerous, and extraordinarily expensive nuclear reactors the Chamber has lost sight of who it represents,” said Mariotte.

“It’s especially disappointing that the Chamber did not use the opportunity to promote offshore wind legislation proposed by Governor Martin O’Malley that is currently before the Maryland legislature. This project—proposed by NRG Energy’s Bluewater Wind—would provide clean energy, jobs, and ultimately affordable electricity for Maryland, while avoiding routine radiation releases, radioactive waste generation and the transmission of Marylanders’ dollars to France,” added Mariotte.

“We suggest that the Chamber would be better off looking out for the interests of its own members—and the interests of U.S. citizens—rather than of foreign governments. In the meantime, NIRS will continue our efforts to stop this and other nuclear power projects (which we’re proud that the Chamber recognized) and protect the American people from skyrocketing nuclear costs, unnecessary radiation exposure and the constant threat of nuclear catastrophe,” Mariotte concluded.