

34 GROUPS TO PRESIDENT OBAMA: NRC COMMISSIONER MAGWOOD MUST GO

Groups Also Seek Inspector General Investigation of Magwood's Violations of Ethics Laws, Conflicts of Interest Related to Seeking and Landing Job Promoting Nuclear Energy; 2 New Letters Follow June 18th Call for Embattled Magwood to Step Down Voluntarily

WASHINGTON, D.C. – July 21, 2014 – Nearly three dozen leading national and local groups – including Friends of the Earth, Physicians for Social Responsibility, the Sierra Club Nuclear Free Campaign, and the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy – are asking President Barack Obama to request the resignation of controversial U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Commissioner William D. Magwood for federal ethics violations and conflicts of interest tied to Magwood's campaigning for and being named to an international job promoting the interests of the nuclear power industry. The 34 groups also sent a separate letter to the NRC Office of Inspector General (OIG) urging an investigation of Magwood that could lead to a referral to the U.S. Department of Justice for prosecution.

The letter to President Obama is available online at <http://www.nirs.org/reactorwatch/licensing/obamamagwoodletter72114.pdf>.

The letter to the NRC OIG is available online at <http://www.nirs.org/reactorwatch/licensing/magwoodbellletter72114.pdf>.

According to the groups, Magwood fatally compromised his role as an independent safety regulator by failing to recuse himself from NRC safety decisions while negotiating for and then accepting the position of Director-General with the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development's Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA). Under its charter, the NEA actively promotes the use of nuclear energy and the economic interests of its member governments, including governments that own or sponsor U.S. nuclear licensees and applicants.

The groups earlier sent a letter on June 18, 2014 asking Magwood to voluntarily step down. They also asked him "to recuse himself from all NRC decisions relating to safety that date back to his application for a position with the NEA, and that he release records related to his application for a position with the NEA." Since then, Magwood has refused to resign or remove himself from rulings involving conflicts of interest.

The letter to President Obama states: "We now ask you to request Mr. Magwood's resignation because you nominated him to the NRC in 2010, and appear to have supported his candidacy to the NEA in 2013. By endorsing a sitting NRC Commissioner for a lucrative position with an entity whose highest priority is to promote nuclear energy, we do not believe you could have intended to elevate nuclear promotion over nuclear safety. Yet that is exactly what has occurred as a result of Mr. Magwood's decision to remain on the NRC and participate in its regulatory activities after seeking and obtaining his job with the NEA ... [W]e urge you to take all steps necessary to ensure that the White House's nominations for new Commissioners to fill the positions recently vacated by Commissioner Apostolakis and about to be vacated by Mr. Magwood are individuals who understand and will respect the independence of the NRC from economic interests or considerations."

The separate letter from the groups to NRC Inspector General Hubert T. Bell states: “Mr. Magwood ... claims he has no conflict of interest because NEA has no financial, research or policy interests that would be directly affected by his decisions. But he completely fails to address the fact that the NEA members who have hired him include countries that own or sponsor U.S. nuclear licensees or applicants, such as France (MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility through AREVA; Nine Mile Point Units 1 and 2, Calvert Cliffs Units 1 and 2, and Ginna through Electricité de France) and the Netherlands (Louisiana Enrichment Services through URENCO). He also overlooks the fact that NEA promotes the financial interests of many private nuclear companies doing business in the U.S. and other countries.”

The letter to the NRC Inspector General concludes: “Therefore, we request you to open an independent investigation into the question of whether and to what extent Mr. Magwood has violated federal ethics rules and/or statutory prohibitions against real or apparent conflicts of interest. Should you conclude that Mr. Magwood has indeed violated federal ethics standards, we ask you to refer this matter to the U.S. Department of Justice.”

The full list of signers of the letters to President Obama and the NRC Inspector General is (in alphabetical order): Alliance to Halt Fermi 3, Beyond Nuclear, Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, Center for a Sustainable Coast, Citizens Allied for Safe Energy, Citizens Environmental Coalition, Citizens Resistance at Fermi 2, Coalition for a Nuclear Free Great Lakes, Don't Waste Michigan, Kay Drey, Ecology Party of Florida, Friends of the Coast, Friends of the Earth, Green States Solutions, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Indian Point Safe Energy Coalition, Captain Dan Kipnis, Missouri Coalition for the Environment, NC WARN, Nevada Nuclear Waste Task Force, New England Coalition, Northwest Environmental Advocates, Nuclear Energy Information Service, Nuclear Information and Resource Service, Nuclear Watch South, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Public Health and Sustainable Energy, Riverkeeper, San Clemente Green, San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace, San Onofre Safety, SEED Coalition, Sierra Club Nuclear Free Campaign, and Southern Alliance for Clean Energy.

For the full text of the June 18th letter to Magwood urging his immediate resignation, see <http://www.nirs.org/reactorwatch/licensing/magwoodletter61814.pdf>.

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