

Support for H. 2167, An Act relative to emergency planning:

My name is Richard Clapp and I am a Boston resident and Professor Emeritus of Public Health at Boston University School of Public Health. In the 1980s, I was Director of the Massachusetts Cancer Registry in the Department of Public Health and documented excess leukemia and thyroid cancer in Plymouth, MA and surrounding communities. I am also a former co-Chair of the Steering Committee of Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility.

I wish to support H. 2167, which would require the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to report on the adequacy of preparedness for a radiological accident at the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station and the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant. As written, this Act would require additional consideration of plume transport and response capacity in the event of a radiological emergency.

Furthermore, if current plans are found to be inadequate, the Act draws specifically requires the Governor to notify the Federal Emergency Management Agency to intervene and to call on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to begin the decommissioning process. Since the Pilgrim station will be decommissioning sometime in the next three and a half years, this provision of the Act has longer-term relevance to the Seabrook plant and Massachusetts communities near it.

This Act is particularly appropriate in light of the Japanese experience after the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster in 2011. Because of the changing direction and magnitude of the radiation plume, the US and Canadian governments recommended an evacuation zone of 80 kilometers (approximately 50 miles) in order to protect humans from harmful exposure. This recommendation should be considered by MEMA as it applies to a radiological emergency affecting populations in Massachusetts within a 50-mile radius of the Pilgrim and Seabrook plants.

I urge members of the Joint Committee on Public Safety to vote in favor of H. 2167.