



Martin Williams, Business Manager - Boilermakers Local 13, Philadelphia
Testimony Prepared for the Pennsylvania Senate Nuclear Caucus Hearing:
Value of Nuclear Power to Pennsylvania Labor, May 23, 2018

Good morning and thank you to Senators Aument, Yudichak and the rest of the caucus for allowing me the opportunity to offer comments this morning.

My name is Martin Williams and I am the business manager of Boilermakers Local Lodge 13. We are located in Newportville, PA, just north of Philadelphia, and represent approximately 650 Boilermakers across the Eastern half of Pennsylvania. Together, with Boilermakers Local 154, Pittsburgh, we represent over 1,800 Boilermakers statewide and are also part of the larger International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, representing over 50,000 Boilermakers in the United States and Canada. In addition to my Boilermaker responsibilities, I have also agreed to represent Boilermakers Local 13 as a co-chair of the Nuclear Powers Pennsylvania coalition. Formed in 2017, Nuclear Powers Pennsylvania is a statewide organization which seeks to educate Pennsylvanians about the economic and environmental benefits of nuclear power throughout our state and the critical role these plants in our local communities.

For those present who are not familiar with our trade, Boilermakers, primarily, fabricate, install, maintain, and repair industrial pressure vessels and work in a variety of industries including power generation, refining, shipbuilding, railroad, manufacturing, and mining. Specifically, and in the context of today's hearing, we help build and maintain the reactors and steam generators that are at the heart of our state's nuclear generating power plants, and consistently work with our contractor partners to provide the highest levels of safety and quality to the nuclear power-generating industry. As an example, from 2010 to 2015, Boilermakers, along with other building trades craft, helped Exelon complete an extended power uprate (EPU) project at its Peach Bottom plant, replacing key components and increasing the total output of the station by 270 MW.¹ Peach Bottom is consistently recognized as a model of efficiency and one of the top operating nuclear plants in the country.

Since Exelon's announcement last year of its intent to close Three Mile Island and, more recently, First Energy's announcement of its intent to close its Beaver Valley plant, we have become extremely concerned about the long-term outlook of nuclear power in Pennsylvania and the impact on employment permanent closure would bring. As I'm sure others will mention today, Pennsylvania's nuclear power plants provide approximately 40% of the state's electricity and account for nearly 16,000 direct and indirect jobs², including 1,400 full-time workers employed at Three Mile Island and Beaver Valley combined. Along with full-time plant workers, direct jobs also include the thousands of building trades workers employed during maintenance outages. Maintenance outages and the work opportunities they provide are critically important as the careers of Boilermakers and other building trades workers often depend on the sustained, frequent succession of temporary assignments. Power plant maintenance, and

¹ Larson, Aaron. 2016. *TOP PLANT: Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, Delta Pennsylvania*. November 11. www.powermag.com.

² Berkman, Mark, and Dean Murphy. 2016. *Pennsylvania Nuclear Power Plants' Contribution to the State Economy*. The Brattle Group.

particularly nuclear plant maintenance, is especially significant to the building trades given the amount of labor required during each maintenance outage. According to data provided by Exelon, FirstEnergy, and Talen Energy, between 2014 and 2016, Pennsylvania's five nuclear plants have reliably provided the building trades with nearly seven million man-hours of outage and maintenance work. Closure of just one facility will eliminate thousands of job opportunities for building trades workers and prove distinctly harmful to Boilermakers since power generation is one of the main industries we service.

Additionally, premature closure of Pennsylvania's five nuclear plants will not only eliminate thousands of jobs and millions of hours of work opportunities, it will also deprive the state of much needed revenue. Currently, Pennsylvania's nuclear plants contribute \$2 billion to the state's economy and pay over \$400 million in state and federal taxes³—taxes which help fund schools, police and fire departments, and other much-needed local services.

The other component of the current nuclear power preservation debate is the impact premature closure of Pennsylvania's five nuclear plants will have on the environment and is predicated on the belief that rising carbon emissions is a major contributing factor to global climate change. For years, Boilermakers have acknowledged the realities of climate change and have successfully advocated at the state and federal level for solutions which simultaneously allow for the responsible use of all of our domestic energy resources, maintenance of a diverse energy portfolio, and job creation. We were very pleased to see expansion of the federal 45Q carbon capture tax credit, which incentivizes investment in carbon capture utilization and storage projects, included in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 and believe it will lead to wider deployment of state-of-the-art, low carbon energy projects.

Consistent with our position, we also believe that preservation of existing nuclear generation is essential to any plan to reduce carbon emissions. Pennsylvania's five nuclear plants are responsible for over 90% of the state's zero emission energy and helps avoid 37 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year, which is the equivalent to taking 8 million passenger cars off the road.⁴ A recent report from the NorthBridge Group⁵ stated that replacing Pennsylvania's nuclear fleet with other carbon dioxide-emitting sources would increase carbon dioxide emissions by 52 million metric tons per year and reverse all of the reductions Pennsylvania has experienced over the past ten years. Moreover, the same report estimates that replacing Pennsylvania's nuclear fleet with zero emissions renewables would require 24x the current amount of wind and solar in Pennsylvania and cost at least \$4 billion per year over the next 20 years to maintain current carbon dioxide emission levels.

The challenges facing Pennsylvania's nuclear power plants are part of a larger, national problem of energy market shifts and low electricity prices placing nuclear power at a disadvantage and must be addressed soon. Recognizing the potential negative economic and environmental impacts to their states, Illinois, New York, and recently, New Jersey all took action to preserve their existing nuclear power-generating assets, and we urge the Pennsylvania General Assembly to do the same—especially given Pennsylvania's current status as the second largest nuclear power-producing state.

Pennsylvania's nuclear power plants are safe, resilient, reliable sources of clean energy, and engines of economic activity—and we should do everything we can to protect them. Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on behalf of Boilermakers Local 13 and the Nuclear Powers Pennsylvania coalition.

³ Berkman and Murphy, 2016

⁴ 2018. *Nuclear Powers Pennsylvania*. www.nuclearpowerspennsylvania.com.

⁵ Schnitzer, Michael, John Hutchinson, and Frank Huntowski. 2018. *Pennsylvania Nuclear Power and Carbon Policy Alternatives*. The NorthBridge Group.