

New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg's position on the Indian Point nuclear power plant, as reported by the New York Times on July 7, boils down to this: no matter how old and dangerous Indian Point's nuclear reactors may be, we're stuck with them.

We can do better than that. We need to do better than that.

Perhaps the Mayor isn't worried about Indian Point, but he should be. Indian Point is at the end of its 40 year design life cycle. It doesn't measure up to over a hundred federal fire safety requirements. Even its staunchest defenders know that Indian Point's evacuation plan is founded on pure fantasy and Columbia University researchers have shown that it is sited on just about the worst place for earthquake risk in the entire New York metro area. Anyone who tells you that what happened at Fukushima can't happen here is either misinformed or in deep denial. And, if safety considerations weren't already enough: Indian Point kills over a billion fish and other river creatures every year, devastating the fish population in the Hudson River spawning grounds and adversely affecting the entire North Atlantic Fishery.

Governor Andrew Cuomo understands that Indian Point must close because of these myriad risks. Cuomo is taking concrete steps to transition the state to a clean, safe energy future, by renewing the Article X power plant siting law, and pushing to meet the state's aggressive energy efficiency and renewable energy goals by 2015.

Contrary to Mayor Bloomberg's warnings, we can transition to a sustainable energy future, without Indian Point and without dooming ourselves to rely on dirty sources of replacement power. Instead, we can increase energy efficiency, establish renewables and improve the state's transmission grid.

Over 5,000 Megawatts (MW) are due to come online by 2015 from renewable energy sources alone. In addition, the potential for renewable power generation within New York City is virtually untapped. Researchers at CUNY predict that putting solar collection panels on two thirds of NYC's rooftops could generate enough power to replace two Indian Points. Thankfully, we only need to replace one.

Combine these safe, sane renewable energy projects with new transmission capacity, such as the 660 MW cross-Hudson transmission line, and then add in easily-attainable energy efficiency savings of 2% per year [New York City's peak power use actually declined last summer – one of the hottest on record -- due to proactive energy conservation policies], and Indian Point's 2,000 MW won't be missed.

Sure, to achieve all this we'll need some big thinking, and Mayor Bloomberg has showed he's up to such challenges many times in the past. He's expanded recycling, banned cigarettes in

restaurants and established PlaNYC, making New York City a cleaner and healthier place. He jeopardizes that legacy by ignoring the extraordinary danger posed by Indian Point.

Mayor Bloomberg and Governor Cuomo owe it to New Yorkers to join forces, close Indian Point and create a new energy policy based on sustainable power sources and energy conservation. If they do, New Yorkers will not only be safer, they'll pay less to the electric company, too. We waste \$2 billion a year in the US, powering TV set top cable boxes we're not even using. Ads all over the New York subway tout how New Yorkers can keep hard-earned dollars in their pocket by making easy, sensible conservation moves.

The Mayor's current position on Indian Point brings to mind the Woody Allen line about the man whose brother-in-law thinks he's a chicken. Asked why he doesn't have the poor fellow committed, he replies: "I would, but I need the eggs."

We don't need Indian Point. Some people think we do. Others gain from keeping it open. We all benefit by its closure.

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