

House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science – Member Day Testimony
Rep. Bradley S. Schneider

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Thank you, Chairman Serrano, for the opportunity to testify.

Zion, Illinois is in my district and is one of the many communities around the country shouldering the burden of a decommissioned nuclear power plant.

Only a few hundred yards from the shores of Lake Michigan sits more than two million pounds of spent nuclear fuel that serves as physical testament to the legacy of nuclear power in our community.

Storing this spent nuclear waste without compensation is just one component of the legacy Zion must bear. The more pervasive impact is the stunting of the local economy.

Zion lost its biggest source of tax revenue when the power plant closed, and now has some of the highest—if not THE highest—property taxes in the country. As a result, homeownership is limited, and companies are wary to move into a community with such a significant tax burden. That is why I am working to pass the STRANDED Act, which would help communities like Zion.

But in the meantime, this committee made a significant contribution towards helping nuclear closure communities last fiscal year. For the first time, in FY2020, funding for the Economic Development Administration included \$15 million to boost economic development in nuclear closure communities.

I am now actively working with Zion to put forward a competitive application. But we know this funding pales in comparison to the need these communities face—and we also know that more communities will face decommissioning in the coming decade.

It is our duty to help communities like Zion, who for too long have shouldered the legacy of nuclear power on their own. The EDA funding you included last fiscal year represents a vital resource for these communities to plan their next chapter of economic growth. I strongly urge this committee to keep level this \$15 million in funding for nuclear closure communities.

Thank you, I yield back.