

## **Provincial growth plan and nuclear plans on collision course**

September 27, 2016 (Toronto) - Environmental groups asked the Minister of Municipal Affairs Bill Mauro today to respect international safety guidelines and protect public safety by restricting population growth around the ten aging nuclear reactors operating in the rapidly growing Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

“The government’s growth plans put public safety at risk. Encouraging population growth around nuclear reactors makes it difficult to evacuate people in the event of a Fukushima-level nuclear accident,” said Jacqueline Wilson, counsel with the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA).

CELA, Durham Nuclear Awareness (DNA) and Greenpeace say the government has ignored international safety standards, the Fukushima disaster, and repeated advice from experts over the past thirty years, which all say high populations densities will undermine the province’s ability to safely evacuate the public in the event of a nuclear accident.

Ontario encourages residential growth in downtown Pickering and Oshawa, which are both less than 10 kilometres from the aging Pickering and Darlington nuclear stations. The Fukushima accident caused a 20 km zone around the station to be evacuated.

The groups are concerned by the disconnect between the government’s growth policies and its recent decision to extend the lives of Pickering and Darlington reactors. Next month, Ontario Power Generation begins a decades-long \$12 billion project to repair the Darlington reactors to keep them operating until mid-century.

“Ontario’s growth plans are on a collision course with its plans to keep the Pickering and Darlington nuclear stations operating. Operating reactors in the GTA was a bad idea in the first place, but to then encourage growth near these reactors is sheer folly,” said Shawn-Patrick Stensil, a senior energy analyst with Greenpeace.

The groups formally asked the Ministry to review its current growth and land use policies, including the *Places to Grow Act*, under Ontario’s Environmental Bill of Rights. The province has three months to respond.

An article published by a group of European risk specialists in the journal *Risk Analysis* this month estimated another Fukushima-scale accident somewhere in the world within the next century.

Despite its responsibility for public safety, Ontario has yet to modernize its offsite nuclear emergency plans five years after Fukushima.

- 30 -

### **Information:**

Shawn-Patrick Stensil, Senior Energy Analyst, Greenpeace, 416-884-7053,  
shawn.patrick.stensil@greenpeace.org

Jacqueline Wilson, counsel, CELA, 416-960-2284, ex 7213, jacqueline@cela.ca