

# **Environmental Coalition Intervenes against Holtec Takeover of Palisades Atomic Reactor**

## ***Beyond Nuclear, Don't Waste Michigan, and Michigan Safe Energy Future Petition U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Raising Health, Safety, Environmental, and Financial Concerns***

[WASHINGTON, DC and COVERT, MI – February 25, 2021] -- Meeting the agency's truncated 20-day deadline, an environmental coalition's legal counsel, Toledo, Ohio attorney Terry Lodge, has submitted [a petition to intervene and request for hearing to NRC](#), on behalf of members of the groups, some of whom live less than a mile from the Palisades nuclear power plant on the Lake Michigan shoreline. The legal and technical challenges opposed to current owner Entergy Nuclear's license transfer to Holtec International for decommissioning purposes and high-level radioactive waste management include [Holtec's disqualifying bad corporate character](#), and its unacceptable bids to drain the already woefully inadequate Nuclear Decommissioning Trust Fund for non-decommissioning expenses, such as irradiated nuclear fuel management and site restoration.

The intervention also objects to Holtec's large underestimation of both decommissioning expenses, as well as irradiated nuclear fuel management expenses. For example, the coalition's expert witness, Robert Alvarez, an Institute for Policy Studies senior scholar, and a former senior advisor to the U.S. Energy Secretary, has shown that Holtec has given no consideration to high burnup irradiated nuclear fuel's higher thermal heat load and radioactivity levels, even though it comprises a large fraction of the fuel to be stored on-site, and likely for much longer than Holtec's overly optimistic year 2066 terminus date.

Lastly, the coalition has argued for NRC to undertake a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, to address: the site's radioactive contamination of soil and groundwater; various "low" level radioactive waste streams, such as steam generators and highly radioactive Reactor Vessel Internals; the need for repackaging irradiated nuclear fuel from non-transportable and even defective current containers into new replacement containers; and increasing radiologic risks due to the current historic high, and worsening, Lake Michigan water levels.

Holtec's proposed takeover would also include Palisades' sibling, the Lake Michigan shoreline Big Rock Point nuclear power plant site in Charlevoix, Michigan, as part of the package deal. Although NRC in 2006 approved the decommissioned site's release for unrestricted use,