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Future Electricity Demand Requires Keeping Diablo Canyon Open -- Don't Condemn Us to Rolling Blackouts

According to the CEC "Energy Demand Forecast (2018-2030 Revised Forecast)", average electricity consumption in California is expected to increase 15% between 2020 and 2030, from 295,000 GWh to 340,000 GWh. At the same time, California is facing an 1800 MW shortfall in power generation capacity in 2025, the same year the last unit at Diablo Canyon is currently scheduled to be turned off. The continued operation of Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, California's largest source of zero-carbon electricity and one that delivers around 18,000 GWh of electricity annually, is imperative to maintaining grid reliability in California.

I ask the California Energy Commission to support legislation that will enable Diablo Canyon to take steps to remain open past 2025. The closure of Diablo Canyon will undoubtedly lead to the recurrent scenario where electricity demand exceeds available supply. This will require grid operators to employ draconian measures in the form of rolling blackouts to protect grid infrastructure, ensure power is available to sensitive sites (hospitals), and to ultimately prevent the shutdown of the entire grid. We can expect this because we have already lived through this scenario which occurred in mid-August 2020. We cannot accept this as our future, we must not accept this. We must act rationally, and without emotion, to make sure Californians never again have to think twice about whether they will have electricity to cook their food, cool their homes, power their medical devices, or simply have illumination during the nighttime.

There are many other advantages for the continued operation of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant: energy security, energy affordability, ultra-low lifecycle carbon emissions, local economic driver and employment, environmental preservation and conservation, and energy adaptability. These only reinforce the importance of extending the operation of Diablo Canyon well into the 2030s.

Diablo Canyon is the pride of the California's electrical generation fleet. Continue the operation of Diablo Canyon to maintain energy reliability for Californians.