



To: Mayor Tory and Executive Committee

From: Dr. Cathy Vakil, Board Member, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)

Re: **Support for Office of Emergency Report EX14.9**

Date: April 15, 2016

I am offering these comments on behalf of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE). Established over 20 years ago, CAPE is an organization that speaks for physicians on environmental issues that have the potential to impact human health.

I would like to begin by congratulating the Toronto Office of Emergency Management for a report which advocates for more transparency and public review in the process of establishing an appropriate emergency plan for nuclear reactors in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), as well as for their support for evidence-based decision-making.

I would also like to thank Toronto's Executive Committee for its interest in the emergency planning for nuclear reactors in the GTA. The public has raised concerns about this issue at past Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission hearings regarding the extension of licences and refurbishments for the aging reactors in Pickering and Clarington. At these hearings, the public expressed particular concern about the fact that emergency plans for these reactors have not been updated since the Fukushima nuclear disaster. People feel that the existing emergency plans are inadequate for the present infrastructure and demographics of the GTA.

As a physician, I am deeply concerned that the emergency plans:

- do not address the health impacts predicted with a major accident on the scale of Fukushima; and
- apply a 10 kilometre radius for the distribution of KI pills which is not in keeping with international best practices and without evidence that this radius is protective of human health.

Measures should be taken to address the above issues. Without a study using an accurate planning basis that reflects the real health threats of a major nuclear accident, appropriate emergency planning is impossible. In addition, an evidence-based approach, using information from such a study, would indicate the need for distribution of KI pills to residents from a much larger radius.

I would like to thank the Executive Committee for allowing me, on behalf of CAPE, to offer comments on this important health issue.

Cathy Vakil MD, CCFP, FCFP
Assistant Professor, Department of Family Medicine
Queen's University