



New York State Archives

**New York State Fact Finding Panel on the Shoreham Nuclear
Power Facility Correspondence and Background Files B0996**

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	On April 19, 1983, Governor Mario Cuomo proposed creation of a fact finding panel "to develop clearly derived, reliable and objective information on the economic costs and safety of the Shoreham Nuclear Power Facility." This series is comprised of materials collected in the course of the Panel's study. The records provide information and comments on the economic impact of preventing Shoreham's operation and on possible safety hazards of allowing it to operate.
Creator:	New York (State). Fact Finding Panel on the Shoreham Nuclear Power Facility
Title:	Fact Finding Panel on the Shoreham Nuclear Power Facility correspondence and background files
Quantity:	0.1 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1983
Series:	B0996

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Administrative History

On April 19, 1983, Governor Mario Cuomo proposed creation of a fact finding panel "to develop clearly derived, reliable and objective information on the economic costs and safety of the Shoreham Nuclear Power Facility."

After a year-long planning process, the Suffolk County government had determined that local conditions on Long Island would make emergency preparedness which would protect the public impossible and informed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) of its decision not to adopt or implement such a plan. The NRC thus could not grant the Shoreham plant an operating license. The Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO), operator of the plant, accused the county government of being more interested in politics than public safety and warned of grave economic consequences if the Shoreham plant was abandoned.

The Fact Finding Panel was formed in May 1983. The 13 members included representatives chosen by the county executives of Nassau and Suffolk County; nonvoting representatives of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

and experts in public health, consumer affairs, nuclear technology, business affairs, suburban studies, economics, and regulation.

Governor Cuomo specifically charged the Panel to examine: projected impact on LILCO ratepayers if the plant did or did not operate; projected revenue and economic impacts on local governments if the plant did or did not operate; amount and potential sources of revenue required to service the debt on Shoreham and to enable LILCO to meet its normal operating costs; nature and manner of assessment of risks associated with the operation of nuclear power plants in general and Shoreham in particular; and federal government requirements regarding development and implementation of off-site emergency preparedness plans and to what degree Suffolk County met or exceeded these standards.

The Panel met 12 times in all-day meetings and held four public hearings. Three subcommittee meetings were also held to discuss safety, economics, and plant operations.

The Panel submitted its final report to the Governor on December 14. Among the general conclusions outlined in the report were: nuclear power was not inherently unsafe, but the current state of practice in the nuclear industry was not up to the level of safety appropriate for public use; the location of the Shoreham plant was not suitable for a nuclear power plant; LILCO did not adequately prepare itself for entry into nuclear power technology and lacked credibility as an operator of a nuclear power plant; the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's practice of deferring consideration of off-site emergency planning response feasibility until after a plant is completed does not make sense; existence of a completed plant is a powerful incentive to find justification to grant an operating license; and not operating the plant would have significant economic implications but would not "be tantamount to economic suicide for the State or the region". (See description for series 18623, Operating Documents of the Fact-Finding Panel on the Shoreham Nuclear Power Facility, for additional background on the Fact-Finding Panel.)

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Scope and Content Note

This series is comprised of materials collected by Panel member Karen S. Burstein, then head of the New York State Consumer Protection Board, in the course of the Panel's study. The small amount of records very incompletely documents the Panel's investigation of nuclear power plant costs and safety.

The records provide information and comments on the economic impact of preventing Shoreham's operation and on possible safety hazards of allowing it to operate. The series includes: correspondence and memoranda to Burstein and other Panel members on the Shoreham plant; statements made to the Panel by Suffolk County government executives; technical information on nuclear power and nuclear power plants; and clippings and articles on the Shoreham controversy and nuclear power plant safety and costs in general.

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Related Information

Related Material

18623Series 18623, Operating Documents of the Fact-Finding Panel on the Shoreham Nuclear Power Facility, contains records of the panel from the Special Counsel to the Governor.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of this material.

Access Terms

- Nuclear power plants
- Executive advisory bodies
- Shoreham (N.Y.)
- New York (State)
- Suffolk County (N.Y.)
- Reports
- Investigating
- U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- Shoreham Nuclear Power Station (N.Y.)
- New York (State). Executive Department
- Long Island Lighting Company
- Burstein, Karen S.