



Kate Harrison
Councilmember, District 4

CONSENT CALENDAR
July 11, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Harrison

Subject: Resolution Opposing Tokyo Electric Power Company and the Government of Japan's Planned Discharge of Wastewater from Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution opposing Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) and the government of Japan's plan to discharge wastewater from Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean and send copies of this resolution to Secretary Blinken, Senator Dianne Feinstein, Senator Alex Padilla, and Representative Barbara Lee.

BACKGROUND

Fukushima radiation began reaching California's shores in 2015 after the 2011 nuclear disaster. On April 13, 2021, the government of Japan announced Tokyo Electric Power Company's (TEPCO) plan to start releasing additional wastewater from the Fukushima Plant as soon as Spring of 2023. With the planned discharge of wastewater from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, we are facing a dire situation which may affect the health of our planet and future generations. Not enough due diligence has been done to ascertain the safety of the discharge, and many experts have argued that TEPCO and the government of Japan are acting without proper understanding of the level of risk it may pose.

TEPCO and the government of Japan claim that the wastewater has been "treated" and, therefore, it poses neither environmental nor health risks. Contrary to their claim, many scientists, marine biologists, marine pollution experts have pointed out severe lack of due diligence, including with respect to the "Advanced Liquid Processing System" (ALPS), the filtration system used at the site. This system cannot remove all radioactive materials before the release.¹ Dr. Tim Deere-Jones, an independent marine pollution researcher, warns that people who live or work within 10 miles from the coastline could

¹ "Fukushima Daiichi ALPS Treated Water Discharge - FAQs." 2022. Wwww.iaea.org. April 27, 2022. <https://www.iaea.org/topics/response/fukushima-daiichi-nuclear-accident/fukushima-daiichi-alps-treated-water-discharge/faq>.

be affected, because ocean water evaporates, which eventually can carry radioactive particles inland.²

In April 2021, three independent human rights experts appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council expressed their concerns that the dumping of wastewater from the Fukushima Daiichi could impact millions of lives and livelihoods in the Pacific region, and such dumping imposes considerable risks to environmental and human rights across the globe.³

On March 6, 2023, the city of West Hollywood passed a resolution opposing TEPCO and the government of Japan's planned discharge of wastewater from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

The City of Berkeley is globally recognized for its environmental leadership and values and has the opportunity to join in the City of West Hollywood's efforts and tens of thousands of concerned citizens worldwide in passing a similar resolution.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Limited staff time associated with sending a letter to designated recipients.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.

Releasing nuclear wastewater will harm marine ecosystems critical to the wellbeing and maintenance of environmental stasis and ocean life.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Kate Harrison, (510) 981-7140

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution
2. Letters of Opposition

² "Fukushima: Japanese Government and IAEA Ignore Radiation Risks to Coastal Population." n.d. Theecologist.org. Accessed June 16, 2023. <https://theecologist.org/2015/sep/28/fukushima-japanese-government-and-iaea-ignore-radiation-risks-coastal-population>.

³ "Japan Must Step up Efforts to Solve Human Rights Fallout from Fukushima Disaster: UN Experts." n.d. OHCHR. Accessed June 16, 2023. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2021/03/japan-must-step-efforts-solve-human-rights-fallout-fukushima-disaster-un>.

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

RESOLUTION OPPOSING TOKYO ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY (TEPCO) AND THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN'S PLANNED DISCHARGE OF WASTEWATER FROM FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT INTO THE PACIFIC OCEAN

WHEREAS, the Peace and Justice Commission advises the City Council on all matters relating to the City of Berkeley's role in issues of peace and social justice (Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 3.68.070); and

WHEREAS, on April 13, 2021, Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) and the government of Japan announced its plan to release more than 1.28 million metric tons of wastewater from the damaged Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean, starting as early as spring 2023 and continuing for the next 30 years; and

WHEREAS, the wastewater from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant is highly radioactive and is fundamentally different from the water from a nuclear power plant during a regular operation; and

WHEREAS, Fukushima radiation has been detected on West Coast shores of the United States and Canada since 2015, and whatever is released in the planned discharge will eventually reach the shores of the United States and Canada and other nations in the Pacific, affecting their marine and coastal environment; and

WHEREAS, radioactive substances contained in the wastewater such as tritium and strontium, when consumed, may have negative long-term health effects on a body; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Arjun Makhijani, along with four other scientists, has pointed out multiple deficiencies in TEPCO's plan, including inadequacies in sampling, inadequacies in assessing the effectiveness of ALPS, and inadequacies in ecosystem assessment; and

WHEREAS, Fukushima agricultural, forestry, fisheries, and consumer cooperatives strongly oppose the TEPCO plan of disposing the wastewater into the Pacific Ocean; and

WHEREAS, civil society groups, elected officials, and scholars in Japan, the United States, and other nations in the Pacific region have expressed concerns with TEPCO's plan and petitioned the Japanese government to reconsider its plan; and

WHEREAS, safer, more environmentally sound alternative solutions have been proposed by Japanese civil society groups, engineers, and researchers; and

WHEREAS, No Nukes Action, a Berkeley based group has networked worldwide to demand a better world free of nuclear power since May 2011, has embarked on a campaign for cities to oppose TEPCO and the government of Japan's planned discharge of wastewater from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant on behalf of citizens who wish to leave a clean planet to future generations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley is situated directly on the San Francisco Bay which is connected to the Pacific Ocean, therefore, its residents and businesses are at risk of being

adversely affected by the planned release.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Berkeley opposes the plan of the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) and the government of Japan to discharge wastewater from the damaged Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council urges U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Berkeley's Congressional delegation to call on TEPCO and the government of Japan to reconsider the plan and adopt a more environmentally sound alternative solution which does not cause unnecessary harm to the marine and human life in the Pacific Region.

BE IT FURTHER AND FINALLY RESOLVED that the Berkeley City Clerk forward a copy of this resolution and accompanying letters to Secretary Anthony Blinken, Senator Dianne Feinstein, Senator Alex Padilla, and Representative Barbara Lee.

Secretary Antony Blinken
2201 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20451

RE: Berkeley City Council Opposes Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) and the Government of Japan's Planned Discharge of Wastewater from Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean

Dear Secretary Blinken,

We write to express our opposition to the government of Japan and Tokyo Electric Power Company's (TEPCO) plan to start releasing additional wastewater from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

There has not yet been adequate research into the effect the wastewater will have on humans, animals, and the environment, but scientists and human rights activists are very concerned by the level of risk the contaminated water may pose. While the government of Japan and TEPCO have ensured the water is safe to release, marine pollution experts have verified that not all radioactive materials can be removed.

For these reasons, the Berkeley City Council strongly opposes the release of wastewater from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

Sincerely,
The Berkeley City Council

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Berkeley City Council Opposes Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) and the Government of Japan's Planned Discharge of Wastewater from Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean

Dear Senator Feinstein,

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Senator Alex Padilla
501 I Street
Suite 7-800
Sacramento, CA 95814

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The Berkeley City Council

The Honorable Barbara Lee
2470 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515-0512

RE: Berkeley City Council Opposes Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) and the Government of Japan's Planned Discharge of Wastewater from Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean

Dear Representative Lee,

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