

Vermont's New Nuclear Moratorium Law

Vermont has become the first state in the union to express its concern with the vital public policy issue of nuclear power. Legislation requiring that the legislature give approval before any new nuclear power plant can be constructed in the state passed the General Assembly and has been signed by the Governor.

The bill, H. 127, was sponsored by 45 Representatives and passed the House on a 106 to 39 vote in early March. The Senate amended the bill slightly and passed it by a margin of 22 to 8 on March 28. On March 31, the House concurred in the Senate amendments and sent the bill to the Governor who signed it into law on April 3, 1975.

Under existing Vermont law (30 V.S.A. §248) no power plant can be constructed in Vermont without a certificate of public good from the Public Service Board. The Public Service Board must find that a need for the plant exists and that it will not have an adverse effect on the environment and public health and safety.

Vermont's new law adds a new subsection to 30 V.S.A. §248 which reads:

(c) Before a certificate of public good is issued for the construction of a nuclear fission plant the public service board shall obtain the approval of the general assembly and the assembly's determination that the construction of the proposed facility will promote the general welfare. The public service board shall advise the general assembly of any petition submitted under this section for the construction of a nuclear fission plant, by written notice delivered to the speaker of the house of representatives and to the president of the senate. The public service board may submit recommendation relating to the proposed plant, and shall make available all relevant material. The requirements of this subsection shall be in addition to the findings set forth in subsection (b) of this section.

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