

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

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ACTION OFFICE: OGC

AUTHOR: SEN Pete Domenici
AFFILIATION: CONG
ADDRESSEE: CHRM Dale Klein
SUBJECT: Concerns NRC's reactor licensing review process

ACTION: Signature of Chairman
DISTRIBUTION: RF, OCA to Ack

LETTER DATE: 05/23/2007

ACKNOWLEDGED: No
SPECIAL HANDLING: Coordinate response with Commissioner Merrifield
NOTES: Response to Congress by June 13, 2007

FILE LOCATION: ADAMS

DATE DUE: 06/06/2007 **DATE SIGNED:**

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May 23, 2007

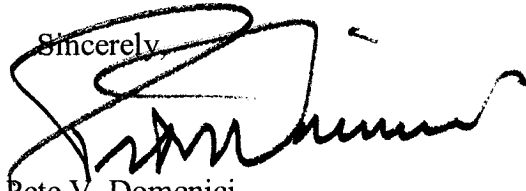
Dr. Dale E. Klein
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Dr. Klein,

This Committee has worked to ensure that the NRC will be able to meet the challenges of the expected new reactor applications. During the licensing process for the current generation of nuclear power plants, there were several examples of completed plants that waited years to be granted operating licenses. I am aware that NRC has changed its licensing regulations to streamline the process into the current Combined Construction and Operating License (COL). I look forward to actual application of this new process.

Some of the delay in licensing plants in the past has been attributed to hearings that were conducted prior to issuing the license. I understand that you asked Commissioner Merrifield to lead a task force to study NRC's reactor licensing review process for recommendations on enhancing effectiveness and efficiency. The Committee is very interested in understanding what the NRC has learned, and whether the NRC would recommend changes in its hearing process to make it more efficient without negatively impacting its effectiveness.

Sincerely,



Pete V. Domenici
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Energy and Water Development