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26TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION,
AND RELATED AGENCIES
INTERIOR

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3226

April 5, 2000

Honorable Richard A. Meserve
Commissioner and Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Chairman Meserve:

On behalf of my constituents who have expressed concern about the recent event at Indian Point Unit 2 in Peekskill, New York, I would like to raise several issues with the commission and ask that they be resolved expeditiously. The alert of February 15 apparently occurred when steam generator tube integrity was compromised and radioactivity was apparently released into the environment. This situation raises, once again, some serious questions about plant safety in a populated area near New York City. Approximately 8 percent of the population in this country live within a 50-mile radius of the Indian Point site. Any significant accident could have catastrophic consequences.

I am sure that principal among your concerns is public safety. Since Unit 2 is shut down, I seek your support for an objective technical review of the capability of Unit 2 to operate safely before it is permitted to restart.

Among the issues that should be addressed are these:

1. Response to and resolution of all issues in the Union of Concerned Scientists' Petition of March 14, 2000, per the provisions of 10 CFR 2.206. This petition asks that all four steam generators be replaced; that the differing professional opinion of Dr. Hopenfeld concerning steam generator tube integrity be decided; that potassium iodide tablets be distributed locally; and that at least one public meeting be held locally to specifically and comprehensively address all issues of safety at Indian Point.

2. Reevaluation of the emergency evacuation plan. On this subject, a public meeting with the NRC was held in Peekskill, New York, on March 14, 2000. It was immediately obvious to the attendees that the existing emergency evacuation plan was developed without local citizen input. This was specifically obvious when questions arose concerning schools, buses and traffic. Citizen input is a crucial element in planning, and this input must be solicited and included in any final version of an evacuation plan. Please explain the roles of the NRC, EPA, FEMA and other federal agencies involved in developing the plan.

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3. A public meeting with NRC and Con Ed to review the safety issues involving Indian Point Unit 2. In order to begin to restore trust in the regulatory system among those who have examined it, the NRC needs to hold a public meeting as soon as possible to review developments at Indian Point with concerned citizens. My constituents have had difficulty obtaining reliable information on Indian Point from various public libraries and from the Agency-wide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), once public documents were removed from local libraries. A public forum permits the opportunity for the federal government and Con Ed to disseminate the latest available information on Indian Point directly to interested attendees. At such a forum, you should permit full public participation by allowing additional voices from the scientific community and the public to be heard and their opinions discussed.

4. Provision of a complete copy of the Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (UFSAR) for Indian Point Units 2 and 3. I plan to remain involved in the oversight of the Indian Point site. You are requested to send a complete copy of these UFSAR's to my office, including periodic updates.

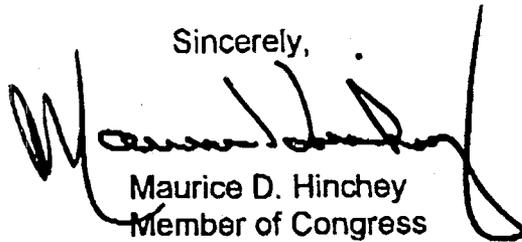
5. Resolution of all outstanding safety measures prior to approval of the sale of Indian Point Unit 2.

Since I know that your primary responsibility is to protect public health and safety, I trust that all safety concerns will be resolved before allowing Indian Point Unit 2 to restart.

Please inform me at your earliest convenience as to when these issues may be resolved. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Best Regards.

Sincerely,



Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress
26th Congressional District, New York

cc: Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner McGaffigan, Jr.
Commissioner Merrifield