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SAM GEJDENSON
2D DISTRICT
CONNECTICUT
RANKING MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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

March 27, 2000

The Honorable Richard Meserve
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mailstop 016C1
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Chairman Meserve:

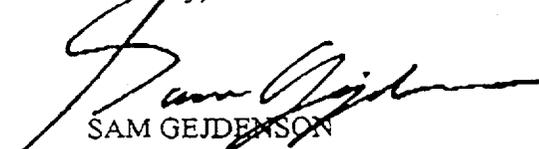
I write regarding the emergency drill held at the Millstone nuclear plant in Waterford, Connecticut on March 15, 2000.

Although it is my understanding that the facilities and personnel complied with Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) standards, a member of my staff who observed the drill expressed concern about several aspects of the drill and technology at the facility.

My staff expressed the belief that the technology in the emergency control center appeared antiquated. The control center lacked modern computers, sustainable network communications, basic audio-visual aids, and it could not accommodate cellular and wireless telephone communications. The communications medium of choice was handwritten messages on clipboards, dry-marker boards and notebooks. Also, there appeared to be no video surveillance or other monitoring equipment in the reactor core, containment vessel and outside the plant so that actual conditions could be observed by control room staff. Moreover, some logistical questions and contingencies were not anticipated. In particular, the drill did not address how or even if workers would move safely between the facility and their homes in the event of a radiation release in the area surrounding the facility. In addition, it appeared that little preparation was made for provisioning the emergency center with food, water and sleeping quarters, should the emergency last for an extended period of time.

Given the history of the Millstone plant, I believe that a cautious approach must be taken regarding safety. Therefore, I would appreciate any information that you can provide about these aspects of the emergency drill. Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


SAM GEJDENSON
Member of Congress

SG:skn