

Mrs. KELLY. I thank the gentleman. I would ask only that the gentleman continue to keep in mind the importance of a strong funding level for the NRC Inspector General as we continue to work on this bill, and also that he continue to vigorously oversee the agency to ensure that unnecessary travel expenses are not incurred by the NRC officials.

Mr. CALLAHAN. If the gentlewoman will yield further, I will continue to closely monitor all expenditures incurred by NRC officials to ensure that their resources are not improperly squandered.

Mrs. KELLY. I thank the gentleman from Alabama very much, the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The amendment is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. DAVIS OF FLORIDA

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. DAVIS of Florida:

In title III, in the item relating to "FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION--SALARIES AND EXPENSES", strike the last proviso (relating to Gulfstream Natural Gas Project).

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, June 27, 2001, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS) and a Member opposed each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to set the context of this amendment because it takes us back a little bit. Last week, we had a debate on the floor of the House of Representatives. It was a very hearty, very democratic debate on the floor about an amendment I offered, along with the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH), to prevent the Secretary of the Interior from going forward with issuing any new leases for offshore oil drilling, oil and gas, 17 miles off the coast of Pensacola, some of the most pristine beaches in not just the State of Florida but of the country, and about 200 miles off the coast of Tampa Bay, my home.

The House adopted our amendment by a vote of 247, and the bill is now in the Senate where it will be debated there. Unfortunately, the highly esteemed chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN), was in Alabama, with other members of

this site is environmentally sound or not. Why should our tax dollars be spent and our health be put at risk without finding out all aspects of this issue? Scientific studies show that transporting such material has potential risks that could end in catastrophic disasters and yet no other option has been proposed.

We must ensure the security of our community. Nuclear waste is a serious issue that must be handled very carefully and thoroughly. I am committed to protecting the health and environment of the 42nd district of California along with all the districts in the United States.

- [End Insert]

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MRS. KELLY

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Mrs. KELLY:

In title IV, in the item relating to "NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION--SALARIES AND EXPENSES", after the second and fourth dollar amounts, insert the following: "(reduced by \$700,000)".

In title IV, in the item relating to "NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION--OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL", after the first and second dollar amounts, insert the following: "(increased by \$700,000)".

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, June 27, 2001, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY).

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise for the purpose of entering into this colloquy with the distinguished chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN).

I wish to discuss the importance of providing additional funding for the NRC Inspector General. I feel

that providing the Inspector General with more resources will help the NRC better perform its responsibility of ensuring the safe operation of our Nation's nuclear power plants. Through my own experience, I have found that the agency's priorities have not always been what they should be.

In February of last year, an accident occurred at the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant in my district. A steam generator tube burst, and the plant was shut down immediately. It goes without saying the people in the community surrounding the plant, myself included, were seriously troubled by this

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accident. We expected the Federal agency responsible for handling nuclear safety would make every effort to quickly repair and restore public confidence in the plant. I regret to say that the NRC fell short of this very reasonable expectation.

Though the agency itself acknowledged that this plant had the highest risk assessment of any plant in the Nation, they were on red as risk assessment, they demonstrated a stunning indifference to a litany of legitimate concerns about the plant's safety. The NRC chairman refused to play any role whatsoever in the very difficult deliberation as to when the plant ought to be started. The NRC chairman refused to hold a commission hearing at the plant, or even come to Buchanan to see the plant and the surrounding community firsthand.

Not once during the entire 11-month period that the plant was down did the chairman or any of the NRC commissioners think they ought to come to Buchanan, New York, and look at this plant. So the chairman can imagine my profound concern when I learned about some of the places that the NRC chairman and the commissioners did think they ought to go during the time the plant was down: places like Korea, Spain, and Mexico. The public record indicates that during the time the Indian Point 2 plant was down, the chairman of the NRC visited a nuclear power plant in Scotland. He visited three in Canada.

During this time, investigators from the IG's office were at Indian Point cataloguing all of their mistakes. They found a troubling number of things at this plant, and the most troubling they discovered was that an inspection performed back in 1997 plainly indicated the strong likelihood of a leak. The NRC had that information back in 1997. It showed that there was a strong likelihood of a leak, but nothing was done because nobody at the NRC ever looked at the inspection report. This should not have happened.

I realize there is a new interest in nuclear power, and I should say that I am not against nuclear power. But the way that the NRC handled the Nation's most troubled plant raises some real concerns. I understand the gentleman from Alabama has provided a generous increase in the funding for the Inspector General in this bill. I commend him and thank him for it.

Is it the gentleman's understanding that this additional funding will be available for further independent reviews of NRC regulating activities?

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. KELLY. I yield to the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. CALLAHAN. I thank the gentlewoman for her work on this issue, Mr. Chairman; and I share her feelings about the importance of ensuring that the NRC Inspector General is provided the resources it needs for conducting independent reviews. This additional \$680 million that we have in this bill is available for this very purpose.