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Mr. Michael T. Lesar, Chief (MS T6—D59)
Rules and Directives Branch - Admin. Services
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Rules and Directives
Branch
USNRC

Dear Mr. Lesar:

My name is Tom Sager. I am associate professor emeritus of computer science at the University of Missouri-Rolla. Through my 18 years with the University of Missouri, I have come to know very well the way this university system operates, including its disdain for the health and safety of its employees and the communities in which it resides.

It has come to my attention that University of Missouri-Columbia (UMC) has applied to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to extend its license to operate the Missouri University Research Reactor (MURR) for an additional five years. I strongly **OPPOSE** this extension and the continued operation of MURR. I request that MURR be shut down, or failing that, that a **FULL** Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be required.

UMC has been negligent in its operation of MURR. In year 2000, UMC was responsible for two serious preventable accidents that could have caused great harm to persons and the environment. This negligence, combined with the continued use of weapons grade uranium (93% U235) could be devastating to the entire state and makes MURR a prime target for terrorism. There is no indication that UMC has become more safety conscious or less negligent. Indeed, MURR continues to be plagued with personnel problems, a high turnover rate, and low employee moral.

Other reasons for shutting down MURR and/or requiring a full EIS are:

- Its location within a city of 75,000 inhabitants presents a clear and present danger. Should there be a serious accident, local hospitals and medical facilities are not equipt to handle a large number of irradiated patients.
- MURR may very well be required to store both high and low level radioactive waste in situ for many years to come. After 14 years of study at an expense of \$4.5 billion, we still do not know whether Yucca Mountain is suitable for long term storage of high level radioactive waste. The Barnwell low level waste disposal site may be closed to UMC in the near future.
- Graphite, which surrounds MURR's beryllium shield, is combustible. Graphite fires are notoriously difficult to extinguish. In addition the routine operation of MURR releases radioactivity into the environment. The transportation of wastes also poses risks of the release of radioactivity. All this presents a clear danger to the UMC campus and the City of Columbia.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the request for an extension of permit to operate MURR, and your kind consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Tom Sager

Tom Sager

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