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Patricia Ladipo  
133 Pine Tree Road  
Ithaca NY 14850  
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OFFICE OF SECRETARY  
RULEMAKINGS AND  
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

Rule-making and Adjudications Staff  
Office of the Secretary  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Sirs:

I am opposed to the NRC proposed rule-making as described in The Federal Register, April 16, 2001, Vol. 66 to change the licensing hearing process for nuclear power reactors. Decisions about the location of nuclear reactors must not be left to a few individuals who are capable of saying, "If you set aside Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, the safety record of nuclear is really very good." It is only full and free public debate that can move the discussion beyond the bottom line and bring human values to bear on an issue. The public is entitled to meaningful participation in an on-the-record hearing process for the licensing of new reactors, the relicensing of aging reactors and industry amendments to operating license safety requirements.

Politicians and their appointees cannot be expected to think beyond their own terms of office to the long term effects of decisions. One of the long term effects of nuclear reactors is the unsolved problem of moving and storing the nuclear wastes. Until that has been solved, any decision to increase the production of such wastes must be assumed to generate problems that will affect future generations as well as generating immediate risks for people near the plants, near the routes to be taken by waste disposal units, and even downstream from the storage sites. Furthermore, until every possible effort is made to harness all sources of renewable energy, there seems to be no practical or moral justification for increasing nuclear power production. Indeed, changing the licensing hearing process would only give more power to the very people who are failing to promote renewable energy sources. The damage this would cause to the already fragile credibility of the current administration is, by itself, a very important reason to keep the hearing processes for nuclear power reactors open and transparent.

Yours truly,

