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September 17, 2001 (8:49AM)

League of Women Voters of South Carolina
P.O. Box 8453
Columbia, SC 29202

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

Sept. 10, 2001

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Office of the Secretary
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

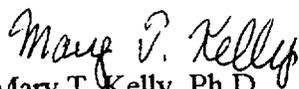
Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudication Staff

As an organization dedicated to the informed participation of citizens in their government we wish to express our strong opposition to the proposed rulemaking as described in The Federal Register, April 16, 2001, Vol. 66 to change the licensing hearing process for nuclear power reactors.

At a time when it is proposed to relicense the Catawba and McGuire reactors to utilize plutonium/uranium fuel, it is a particularly unwise way to proceed. These reactors were never designed to burn plutonium/uranium fuel. The plutonium containing MOX fuel has different characteristics from the uranium fuel for which the reactors were designed and is expected to pose greater dangers in terms of radioactivity and increased embrittlement of the reactor vessels.

We realize that proponents of nuclear power have long sought to streamline the licensing process. However, when dealing with such a dangerous technology, it is foolish - even criminal - not to follow the most open and careful process possible. The stakes are too great in respect to public health, safety, and in basic economics. Experience shows that the price is heavy when the public is kept out of the public's business. The price will be even heavier if anything goes wrong and the problem can be traced to short changing the public process that could have allowed examination of important safety and procedural factors.

Sincerely,


Mary T. Kelly, Ph.D.