Organization of Agreement States

William Sinclair, Chair
Pearce O'Kelley, Chair-Elect
Kathy Allen, Past Chair
Stanley Fitch, Secretary
Kenneth Weaver, Secretary-Elect

March 26, 2002

Paul H. Lohaus, Director
Office of State and Tribal Programs
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear ~~Mr. Lohaus~~ Paul,

On behalf of the Organization of Agreement States (OAS), I would like to express our regrets for selecting an alternate location for the 2002 OAS annual meeting. We appreciate your willingness to host the 2002 meeting and all the work you and your staff performed in preparation for the meeting.

The decision to move the site of the annual meeting was difficult. As you are aware, many factors played into our decision. Many states are facing and have already faced significant budget cuts. My program alone is down 23 % since last July. We felt the high costs associated with the Washington, D.C. area, specifically the $165 a night room costs, would significantly reduce the number of state participants. Since this is a state-based organization, maximizing state participation is our prime concern.

We would like to apologize for any miscommunication about OAS expectations for hosting states or agencies. We realize that use of the auditorium was impacted by the security measures in place since September 11 and alternate arrangements had to be considered. I would like to thank the NRC staff that worked diligently to secure locations for the meeting, specifically, Brenda Usilton and Lloyd Bolling along with any others with whom we are not aware.

We would like to continue to work with you and your staff to see if we can find a way for the NRC to host an upcoming annual meeting. We do feel that the increased NRC participation that would have been possible with a Washington meeting would be beneficial to both the NRC staff and the Agreement States. Hopefully, with more long range planning we will be able to meet in Washington or at least nearby.

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March 26, 2002

Again, we would like to thank you and your staff for all your efforts. We have experienced an improved working relationship with the NRC and look forward to continuing to do all we can to sustain those improvements.

Sincerely,

T. Pearce O'Kelley, Chair-Elect
Organization of Agreement States

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