

June 11, 2002

Ms. M. Darla Motil
416 Bradley Road
Bay Village, OH 44140

Dear Ms. Motil:

I am responding on behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to your letter of April 29, 2002, regarding your concerns of safety issues at FirstEnergy's Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station (Davis-Besse). In your letter you requested that the NRC shut down Davis-Besse permanently. You also mentioned that you are fighting Hodgkin's Disease and that you are very concerned about the effects of environmental pollution and leakage of nuclear radiation. I would like to express my appreciation for your effort in bringing your concerns to the attention of the NRC.

The evaluation of health effects from exposure to radiation, both natural and man-made, is an ongoing activity involving public, private, and international institutions. International and national organizations, such as the International Commission on Radiological Protection and National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements, provide consensus standards developed from recent and ongoing research. The NRC's regulatory limits for effluent releases and subsequent dose to the public are based on the radiation protection recommendations of these organizations. The NRC provides oversight of all licensed commercial nuclear reactors to ensure that regulatory limits for radiological effluent releases and the resulting dose to the public from these releases are within the established limits. The regulations related to radiological effluents and dose to the public can be found in the *Code of Federal Regulations*, 10 CFR Part 20 and 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix I.

At the request of Congress, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) conducted a study in 1990, "Cancer in Populations Living Near Nuclear Facilities," to look at cancer mortality rates around 52 nuclear power plants, including Davis-Besse, nine Department of Energy facilities, and one former commercial fuel reprocessing facility. The NCI study concluded "from the evidence available, this study has found no suggestion that nuclear facilities may be linked causally with excess deaths from leukemia or from other cancers in populations living nearby." Additionally, the American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org) has concluded that although reports about cancer case clusters in such communities have raised public concern, studies show that clusters do not occur more often near nuclear plants than they do by chance elsewhere in the population. The American Cancer Society recognizes that "public concern about environmental

M. Darla Motil

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cancer risks often focuses on risks for which no carcinogenicity has been proven or on situations where known carcinogen exposures are at such low levels that risks are negligible. Ionizing radiation emissions from nuclear facilities are closely controlled and involve negligible levels of exposure for communities near such plants.”

The NRC shares your concern about the effects of environmental pollution. We continue to regulate Davis-Besse and other nuclear power reactors to ensure they operate in a manner that adequately protects public health and safety and the environment. Thank you for bringing your concerns to the attention of the NRC.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Anthony J. Mendiola, Chief, Section 2
Project Directorate III
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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