

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

FROM: DUE: 10/03/03 EDO CONTROL: G20030567
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FINAL REPLY:

Representative Eliot L. Engel

TO:

Chairman Diaz

FOR SIGNATURE OF : ** GRN ** CRC NO: 03-0616

Travers, EDO

DESC:

ROUTING:

Support of the Request by the Union of Concerned
Scientists and Riverkeeper, Inc. Urging NRC to
Order the Shutdown of Indian Point

Travers
Norry
Paperiello
Kane
Collins
Dean
Burns
Miller, RI
Cyr, OGC
Skay, NRR
Goldberg, OGC

DATE: 09/24/03

ASSIGNED TO: CONTACT:
NRR Dyer

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

Date Printed: Sep 23, 2003 09:10

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ACTION OFFICE: EDO

AUTHOR: REP Eliot Engel
AFFILIATION: REP
ADDRESSEE: CHRM Nils Diaz
SUBJECT: Provides support for the request by the Union of Concerned Scientists and Riverkeeper, Inc. urging NRC to order the shutdown of Indian Point NPP

ACTION: Appropriate
DISTRIBUTION: Chairman, Comrs, RF, OCA Ack

LETTER DATE: 09/22/2003
ACKNOWLEDGED: No
SPECIAL HANDLING:

NOTES:
FILE LOCATION: ADAMS

DATE DUE: **DATE SIGNED:**

ELIOT L. ENGEL
17TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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September 22, 2003

The Honorable Nils J. Diaz, Ph.D.
Chairman
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I write to add my support to the recent request by the Union of Concerned Scientists and Riverkeeper, Inc. urging the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to order the shutdown of the Indian Point nuclear power plant. As the UCS-Riverkeeper petition points out, a recent study by the Los Alamos National Laboratory shows that the pumps in Indian Point's containment buildings that provide the primary source of coolant in case of a major pipe break at the reactors are in danger of failing.

If such an accident were to occur, hot water pouring from the system would instantly turn to steam, which would eventually condense in a huge pool on the floor of the containment building. The sump pumps are designed to re-circulate the water back through the reactors to prevent a fuel meltdown and possible release of radiation.

However, agency studies have found that the superheated steam could cause the insulation to disintegrate and possibly clog the sump pumps. If that happened, the water could not be re-circulated and a meltdown and subsequent radioactive release could occur. A study prepared for the NRC by the Los Alamos National Laboratory concluded that the chances of a reactor meltdown increase by nearly a factor of 100 at Indian Point because the plant's containment sumps are "almost certain" to be blocked with debris during an accident.

The Los Alamos study rejects the possibility that clogging in the event of a loss of coolant accident at Indian Point could be prevented by other safety measures. "The indicated outcome is almost certain," the report's authors said. "Consideration of all identified uncertainties has been made, and none has been found to have a credible effect on the outcome."

The Honorable Nils J. Diaz

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The problems with continued operation of Indian Point continue to grow. This recent revelation of an accidental pipe bursting and subsequent pump failure is now added to the existing problems of inadequate evacuation for area residents and also, most alarmingly, serving as a target for terrorists. The people of Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, and Orange Counties deserve to have their safety put ahead of corporate profits.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eliot L. Engel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Eliot L. Engel
MEMBER OF CONGRESS