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CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

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AUTHOR: Margaret Bartenhagen
AFFILIATION: VT
ADDRESSEE: Nils Diaz
SUBJECT: Vermont Yankee Uprate - request for Independent Safety Assessment

ACTION: Appropriate
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February 28, 2004

CHAIRMAN REC'D

04 MAR 30 AM 10:35

Mr. Nils Diaz, Chairman
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20005-0001

RE: VERMONT YANKEE UPRATE

Dear Mr. Diaz:

I am taking the time to write this letter, rather than send you a quick email, to make a point as to the seriousness of this issue and my request regarding it.

I am writing to urge you as Chair of the NRC to require a comprehensive, independent safety assessment of this plant – similar to the one conducted several years ago at Maine Yankee – before any decision is made on Entergy's request for an increase in power output for Vermont Yankee. Doing an independent safety assessment would be a prudent, conservative and appropriate decision in order to reassure the people of the region that safety margins will at least remain at present levels under the proposed extended power uprate at Vermont Yankee.

*As you may know, there are grave concerns about the safety of Vermont Yankee, particularly as it relates to the uprate request by Entergy Nuclear. Among these are the fact that of all the "Yankee family" of nuclear reactors, **only Vermont Yankee survives**. It has been in commercial operation longer than any plant in New England. **Vermont Yankee cannot meet current design and safety criteria**, but has been "grandfathered in" by the NRC. **Its obsolete design could not be built or licensed today**; Entergy Corporation proposes the extraordinary measure of boosting reactor power at Vermont Yankee to **120% of its original 1960's design** (the maximum so far permitted or ever attempted for Boiling Water Reactors).*

Personally, I do not wish my family to become part of a dangerous experiment based on incomplete and uncertain data whose main goal (apparently) is an increase in revenue for out-of-state owner Entergy Nuclear.

I would fully expect, given the factors outlined above regarding this plant, that you would find it prudent and appropriate to require an independent safety assessment of VY before any uprate request is considered.

Sincerely,



Margaret P. Bartenhagen - Brattleboro, Vermont