



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

CHAIRMAN

May 4, 2004

The Honorable Charles F. Bass
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Bass:

I am responding on behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to your letter dated April 7, 2004, in which you forwarded a copy of a letter from your constituent, Mr. Fred M. Slavic. Mr. Slavic is concerned about a request by Entergy Nuclear Vermont Yankee, LLC, and Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc., to amend the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station license to increase the power level of the facility. In his letter, Mr. Slavic requests that you induce the NRC to perform an independent safety inspection of Vermont Yankee, as proposed by the Vermont Public Service Board.

On May 4, 2004, I sent a letter to the Vermont Public Service Board explaining the NRC's approach in response to their request for an independent engineering assessment. I enclose a copy of that letter for your information. The NRC plans to use an improved engineering inspection at Vermont Yankee, as described in the enclosed letter. The NRC staff has concluded that the detailed technical review, combined with the inspections prescribed by the reactor oversight process, as enhanced by a new engineering inspection, is the most effective method of informing its decision on whether Vermont Yankee could safely operate under uprated power conditions.

Mr. Slavic also expressed concerns regarding the effects of an accident at the plant and insurance coverage related to the Price-Anderson Act. The NRC staff is still evaluating these issues and will reply to them in separate correspondence.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nils. J. Diaz

Enclosure:
Letter to the Vermont Public Service Board