

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 18, 1998

The Honorable Shirley Ann Jackson
Chairwoman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Room 18H1
One White Flint North Building
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, Maryland 20852-2738

Dear Chairwoman Jackson:

It is our understanding that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is proposing to change the number of hours of training and experience required for using radioactive materials (I-131) for the treatment of thyroid disease.

While changes may be necessary for some professions who use these materials, we are concerned that the new requirements create an unnecessary burden for physicians, in particular, endocrinologists. Currently, I-131 is used in the treatment of hyperthyroidism and thyroid carcinoma. Endocrinologists have used this material in this capacity for nearly 50 years, with few, if any, problems. Additionally, the clinical use of I-131 by endocrinologists has not expanded to a point which we believe requires new and cumbersome regulations.

It is our understanding from the endocrinologists in our respective Congressional districts that this regulation will result in higher costs for training these particular physicians and result in fewer newly trained doctors choosing to avail themselves of this specialty. In the end, the American public suffers as less endocrinologists trained in the use of I-131 are available to administer this treatment. We find it troublesome that the NRC would implement this particular regulation without giving proper consideration to the increased cost of the regulation, on both the doctor and patient, relative to the supposed benefits of the regulation. We encourage the NRC to look closely at the arguments posed by the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists and give careful consideration to the impact of this proposed regulation on the American people.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our input on this important matter, and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Ken Bentsen
Member of Congress



Bill Archer
Member of Congress

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Henry Bonilla

Henry Bonilla
Member of Congress

Pete Sessions

Pete Sessions
Member of Congress

Kevin Brady

Kevin Brady
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee

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