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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-4705

April 14, 1998

Dr. Shirley Jackson
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Chairman Jackson:

I understand that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is undergoing a process of revising its regulations to be more risk-based and performance-oriented. The part of this process that is of concern to me involves revision of 10 CFR Part 35, which applies to the medical use of radioisotopes. While I support the direction in which the commission is moving, some of my constituents in the radiology community take issue with the trend that is reflected in the early drafts of the revisions relating to the training and experience necessary to become licensed to use radioisotopes diagnostically. For example, the new proposal would require only 120 hours of training instead of the six months of training that is currently the standard.

The record of safe usage of radioisotopes compiled over the years under NRC Licensure is a very good one, but with the severe reductions in required training and experience that are being considered, this record of safe usage could end and more incidents that jeopardize patient care will occur. My constituents and I believe that patient care would best be served if the training and experience requirements were revised to at least three months and include other recommendations submitted by the American College of Radiology.

I urge you to consider carefully the implications of the proposal that the NRC staff is preparing for your approval. It would be unfortunate to move too far in a direction that puts patients at risk.

Best regards.

Cordially,

George R. Nethercutt, Jr.
GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.
Representative in Congress

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This letter was added
to the previous
Congressional letters
that are now with SECY,
regarding 10 CFR Part
35. 4/23/98