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From: Sunday Waldon <upblueberry@ironbay.net>
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August 30, 2005 (10:00am)

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

Dear Ms. Vietti-Cook:

I have been informed by Public Citizen that you are accepting public comments on a petition for rulemaking regarding license extensions of nuclear plants. I support Westchester County Executive Andrew Spano's Petition for Rulemaking PRM-54-02. In my opinion, the current relicensing regulations are most definitely not in the best interest of the public and our health and safety. Please help protect the public by ensuring that nuclear plants continue to meet the highest standards that are based on the most current experience and knowledge.

There has been no experience thus far about what happens to a nuclear plant as it ages. The earliest ones were built with expected operating lifespans of forty years. To permit 20-years extensions would be foolhardy. I strongly doubt that industry and regulatory oversight are good enough to prevent dangerous, unforeseen problems arising from normal wear and tear of aging plants. The near-disaster in Ohio at the Davis-Besse plant is a good example for this point.

The simple fact, alone, that early plants can be repeatedly relicensed, in view of the fact that their designs are outmoded and unsafe, is argument for improving and tightening nuclear plant licensing. 33 older plants have been relicensed and no applications have been rejected.

Designs of older plants, the GE Mark I and II, for instance, could not be approved today, let alone be given license extensions. Or would they?

Reactors were built in areas that were rural then but are now heavily developed and populated, making consequences of attack or accident even more serious.

I am also adamantly against putting more nuclear plants into operation because there still is no acceptable place to store the tons of waste they generate. The Dept of Energy does not even have a radiation protection standard on which it can base a design for storage.

I do a slow burn when I hear nuclear plants described as being nonpolluting and clean, when their byproducts are every bit as dangerous as byproducts of fossil fuels and will be dangerous for thousands of years.

I strongly urge your agency to tighten licensing rules and strictly hold plants to the safest possible standards, based on the current level of informations available.

I will watch this issue closely and I will also watch the stands taken by my representatives in Congress. I talk and I vote.

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