

November 4, 2005

The Honorable Susan M. Collins, Chair
Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Madam Chair:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am writing in response to the Committee's request for information regarding the NRC's roles and responsibilities in preparing for and responding to Hurricane Katrina. I have enclosed specific responses to the questions raised in your letter of October 7, 2005. In addition, I have enclosed a copy of the written testimony I presented to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on November 2, 2005.

The primary mission of the NRC, under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is to regulate the civilian commercial, industrial, academic, and medical uses of nuclear materials in order to ensure adequate protection of the public health and safety, and promote the common defense and security. The NRC actively prepares for and responds to incidents, including hurricanes and other natural phenomena, that may impact licensed facilities or materials.

Regarding Hurricane Katrina, the NRC took appropriate steps within its purview and in accordance with established emergency plans and procedures to prepare for and respond to the hurricane. Within its statutory authority and responsibilities, the NRC cooperated extensively with other Federal, State, and local agencies to support timely and effective implementation of the National Response Plan.

If you have additional questions regarding these matters, please contact me.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nils J. Diaz

Enclosures:

1. Response to Questions
2. Written Testimony for the Hurricane Katrina
Hearing, November 2, 2005

cc: Senator Joseph I. Lieberman