

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

FROM: DUE: 05/29/07 EDO CONTROL: G20070320
DOC DT: 05/02/07
FINAL REPLY:

Lisa Rainwater
Riverkeeper

TO:

Chairman Klein

FOR SIGNATURE OF : ** GRN ** CRC NO: 07-0324
Dyer, NRR

DESC:

NRC to Reverse Decision to Limit Public
Participation in Relicensing of Nuclear Power
Plants

ROUTING:

Reyes
Virgilio
Kane
Ash
Silber
Ordaz
Cyr/Burns
Collins, RI

DATE: 05/08/07

ASSIGNED TO: CONTACT:
NRR Dyer

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Commission to review prior to dispatch. Add EDO
and Commission on for concurrence.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

Date Printed: May 08, 2007 10:32

PAPER NUMBER: LTR-07-0324 LOGGING DATE: 05/07/2007

ACTION OFFICE: EDO

AUTHOR: Lisa Rainwater

AFFILIATION: NY

ADDRESSEE: Dale Klein

SUBJECT: Request that the NRC reverse its decision to limit public participation in the relicensing of nuclear power plants

ACTION: Direct Reply

DISTRIBUTION: RF, SECY to Ack

LETTER DATE: 05/02/2007

ACKNOWLEDGED No

SPECIAL HANDLING: Made publicly available in ADAMS via EDO/DPC

NOTES: Commission should review response prior to dispatch

FILE LOCATION: ADAMS

DATE DUE: 05/³¹~~30~~/2007

DATE SIGNED:



RIVERKEEPER.

1037

CHAIRMAN REC'D

07 MAY -4 PM 4:08

Dale Klein
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
One White Flint North
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, Maryland 20852-2738

May 2, 2007

Dear Chairman Klein:

Riverkeeper is formally requesting that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) reverse its decision to limit public participation in the relicensing of nuclear power plants, and reinstate its policy of providing at least three public meetings during the license renewal process.

On April 30, 2007 Entergy Nuclear Northeast submitted its license renewal application for the Indian Point nuclear power plant located in Buchanan, New York. According to information obtained from the NRC's website on the status of reactor license renewals, agency staff reduced the number of public meetings in the license renewal review schedule beginning in August 2006 with the Fitzpatrick application from three to two, greatly diminishing the public's ability to understand and participate in the nuclear power plant license renewal process. This was accomplished by combining the initial public information meeting on the license renewal process and the meeting on environmental scoping into one meeting, held several months after the application is submitted. License renewal schedules prior to Fitzpatrick, such as for Vermont Yankee and Pilgrim, ensured that the public information meeting took place approximately a month after the application was submitted, much sooner than the current schedule provides. This change does a disservice to the public in two critical ways.

First, combining the meetings does not allow the public time to use knowledge about the environmental review process they would have learned in the initial information meeting to augment comments made at the environmental scoping meeting, which would have taken place several months later. Instead, the public is expected to learn about the renewal process during the first half of the meeting, and make substantive scoping comments during the second half. This abridged process virtually guarantees that the quality and quantity of public comments and questions will be diminished.

Second, combining two public meetings into one undoubtedly results in less actual time for the public to ask questions and submit comments. This clearly reduces the number of

concerned citizens who will be able to fully participate at a single meeting. Notwithstanding the public's continuing opportunity to file written comments on the scoping process, that is no substitute for a live public forum at which citizens can ask specific questions of the NRC staff.

In a time when the NRC is attempting to improve its public image and increase public confidence in its ability to oversee the nuclear industry, limiting public participation in a crucial process such as the relicensing of a nuclear power plant does little to increase public faith in the agency charged with protecting public health and safety regarding the operation of nuclear facilities.

We live in a society based on democratic principles. The public deserves the right to participate fully in this democratic process – cutting corners denies this right. Therefore, we urge the NRC to reinstate its policy of providing at least three public meetings, including separate license renewal process and scoping meetings during the renewal reviews of nuclear power plants, beginning with Indian Point.

We look forward to receiving a response from your office.

Sincerely,



Lisa Rainwater, PhD
Indian Point Campaign Director

CC:

Commissioner Merrifield
Commissioner Lyons
Commissioner Jaczko
Commissioner McGaffigan
Sam Collins, Regional Administrator, Region 1