

23
From: Eric Duncan
To: ExponentReportGroup
Date: 04/05/2007 12:02:55 PM
Subject: Fwd: Kucinich Press Conference

To all,

Per the attached, Congressman Dennis Kucinich (D-OH) will hold a press conference tomorrow to discuss the Exponent report.

Eric.

F-119

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From: Eric Duncan

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From: Viktoria Mitlyng
To: Eric Duncan; James Caldwell
Date: 04/05/2007 11:43:07 AM
Subject: Kucinich Press Conference

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Natalie Laber (202) 225-5871 (o); (202) 365-1040 (c)

Kucinich: Report Raises Questions of
Davis-Besse Near Meltdown
Will Host Press Conference Friday at 11 a.m. in Lakewood Office

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 5) - Congressman Dennis Kucinich (D-OH) released the following statement after an independent report found corrosion of the Davis-Besse nuclear reactor located in Northern Ohio happened at a faster rate, bringing the reactor closer to a catastrophic incident than was first reported.

"The report findings really raise the question about FirstEnergy's competence to be licensed to operate a nuclear power plant," Kucinich said.

"Either FirstEnergy incompetently managed the plant and allowed a leak to corrode the reactor vessel over many years, or FirstEnergy incompetently reported the root cause of the near meltdown to the NRC. Either way, they are incompetent: regulators should revoke their license.

Exponent was tasked with analyzing the data from the 2002 catastrophe at Davis-Besse because of arbitration between FirstEnergy and its insurance company. According to its Web site, Exponent is an engineering and scientific consulting firm that specializes in disasters and accidents.

On March 9, 2007, Kucinich sent a letter to the Administrator of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission demanding that the NRC deny FirstEnergy the ability to bypass special safety requirements, which the NRC mandated after a near meltdown at the Davis-Besse facility in Northern Ohio. On March 12, 2007, the NRC announced that FirstEnergy would continue to adhere to its special safety requirements.

The NRC imposed a requirement of independent assessments on FirstEnergy after FirstEnergy's mismanagement and efforts to evade its detection nearly resulted in a disaster at the Davis-Besse nuclear facility near Cleveland, when in February 2002, a football-sized crater was found in the reactor vessel.

The NRC later reported that the plant might have been as close as 60 days to bursting the slim steel liner that stood in the way of radioactive release into the air.

The Government Accountability Office has called the near disastrous event at the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Plant, 'the most serious safety issue confronting the nation's commercial nuclear power industry since Three Mile Island.'

"This report not only raises questions about the competency of FirstEnergy but also about the accuracy of its original assessment.

"For five years I have fought to ensure the Davis-Besse plant is safe to the residents of Northern Ohio. This report confirms what I have been saying all along: the case of the Davis-Besse facility illustrates both the need for tighter regulation and for more oversight over the NRC and the entire nuclear industry."

Kucinich will host a news conference tomorrow, April 6, 2007, in Lakewood, Ohio, at 11 a.m. The news conference will be at 14400 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio, 44107.

Kucinich plans on outlining a series of measures which he will take as Chairman of the Domestic Policy Subcommittee.

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CC: Strasma, Jan