

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 2, 1996

Ms. Shirley A. Jackson
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Ms. Jackson:

We are writing about the potential risks to our constituents posed by continuing safety violations at the Indian Point 3 nuclear power plant in Buchanan, New York. As representatives of millions of New Yorkers who live in the vicinity of the plant, we urge the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to take all necessary action to ensure that these violations cease.

As you know, in February 1993 the Indian Point 3 plant was shut down after the New York Power Authority (NYPA) filed reports with the NRC admitting that the plant had not complied with its safety design criteria. Because safety problems at the plant were so acute, the plant did not resume operations until June 1995 -- almost two and a half years later.

We understand that as soon as the plant resumed operations this June, the NRC found safety violations of the same type that had been occurring before the shutdown. As far as we are aware, however, the NRC has taken no enforcement action as a result of those violations. Moreover, on several occasions since June Indian Point 3 has again been cited for failing to follow safe operating procedures. Most recently, in mid-October the temperature of the reactor's cooling system was raised while three pumps that serve backup safety systems were inoperable, in violation of the plant's operating procedures.

The continuing violations at Indian Point 3 lead us to seriously question why the NRC permitted Indian Point 3 to resume operations when the underlying causes that led to its shutdown in 1993 had not been corrected. We want to know why these violations continue to occur and what action the NRC is taking with the NYPA to ensure they do not continue.

In light of the plant's location in one of the nation's most densely populated regions, our constituents rely upon

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your agency to ensure their safety by holding Indian Point 3
to the very highest safety standards.

We appreciate your prompt attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Eliot L. Engel

Prate M. Lowery

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Edward L. Engel

Walter M. Lawley