

May 27, 2011

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairman, Committee on Environment
and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Madam Chairman:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter of March 22, 2011, urging us to ensure transparency and openness in our review and evaluation of recent events in Japan.

The NRC has a long history of, and commitment to, transparency, participation, and collaboration in our regulatory activities. We recognize that as a result of the nuclear emergency in Japan, the NRC's actions are being followed by the public, policymakers, and other stakeholders even more closely than before. We understand that this increased attention makes it even more important that we conduct the public's work in an open and transparent manner.

The Commission is committed to ensuring that the agency's review of the events in Japan and evaluation of the implications of those events for U.S. commercial nuclear power plants will be as transparent as possible. The Commission will be briefed periodically by staff in public meetings that are simultaneously webcast; the first of these Commission meetings was held on May 12, 2011. As the agency's review progresses, the NRC staff will prepare reports concerning the events in Japan and documenting our assessment of whether NRC should make any improvements to our regulatory system. Those reports will be publicly available.

The Commission also is committed to ensuring that it fulfills its safety mission in a manner that is consistent with the spirit of the Administration's Open Government Initiative and the NRC's historic organizational values. It is through open and transparent decision making that the agency can ensure public confidence in the protection of public health and safety.

Thank you for your interest in this matter.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Gregory B. Jaczko