

September 8, 2011

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter of July 19, 2011, seeking information regarding our specific plans and schedule for review of the findings and recommendations of the Near-Term Task Force review of insights from the Fukushima Dai-ichi accident.

The Task Force first submitted its report to the Commission on July 12. On July 19, Task Force members presented their recommendations to the Commission in a public meeting. On July 28, the NRC staff held a public meeting to discuss the results of the Near-Term Task Force with the public and other interested stakeholders. Approximately 75 members of the public and other stakeholders participated in the meeting at NRC headquarters, with additional participants on the telephone or webstreaming. After presenting its findings, the Task Force took questions from nearly 30 participants on a wide variety of topics, including spent fuel storage, emergency preparedness, and the ability of U.S. nuclear plants to withstand earthquakes. In addition, the staff briefed the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) subcommittee on the events at Fukushima on August 16.

On August 19, 2011, the Commission directed the staff to take the following actions:

- Within 21 days, provide to the Commission for its consideration, a paper outlining which of the Task Force's recommendations 2 - 12, either in part or in whole, the staff believes should be implemented without unnecessary delay. The 21-day effort will include a public dialogue on the staff's proposal, and the staff expects to announce a public meeting in the next few days.
- Within 45 days, provide to the Commission for its consideration, a prioritization paper on Task Force recommendations 2 - 12. This paper is expected to lay out all agency actions to be taken in responding to lessons learned from the Fukushima Dai-ichi accident. The paper will also lay out a schedule for interacting with the public, other stakeholders and the ACRS.

- Within 18 months, provide to the Commission a paper to consider the Task Force's first and broadest recommendation, a call for revising the NRC's regulatory approach. The Task Force felt the NRC should find a better balance between the use of risk analysis to inform regulation and the "defense in depth" concept that underlies many of the agency's original requirements. Doing so would create a regulatory framework that is logical, systematic, coherent and more easily understood. The paper is expected to provide options, including a recommended course of action, in dealing with the Task Force's first recommendation.

I thank you for your interest in the Task Force's work and the Commission's next steps. If you have any further questions or need additional information, please contact me or Ms. Rebecca Schmidt, Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs at (301) 415-1776.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Gregory B. Jaczko

cc: Representative Henry A. Waxman

Identical letters sent to:

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce
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Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Henry A. Waxman

The Honorable Joe Barton
Chairman Emeritus, Committee on Energy
and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cliff Stearns
Chairman, Subcommittee on Oversight
and Investigations
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Diana DeGette

The Honorable Ed Whitfield
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Bobby L. Rush

The Honorable John Shimkus
Chairman, Subcommittee on Environment
and the Economy
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Gene Green

The Honorable Joseph K. Pitts
Chairman, Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Frank Pallone, Jr.

The Honorable Mary Bono Mack
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce,
Manufacturing and Trade
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative G.K. Butterfield

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman, Subcommittee on Communications
and Technology
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Anna G. Eshoo

The Honorable Michael C. Burgess
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lee Terry
United States House of Representatives
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The Honorable Marsha Blackburn
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The Honorable Sue Myrick
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The Honorable Brett Guthrie
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The Honorable Steve Scalise
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The Honorable Leonard Lance
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The Honorable Adam Kinzinger
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The Honorable H. Morgan Griffith
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