

August 10, 2011

The Honorable Daniel A. Wolf  
Massachusetts Senate  
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

SUBJECT: RELICENSING OF PILGRIM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Dear Mr. Wolf:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter of July 12, 2011, to Chairman Gregory B. Jaczko in which you expressed concerns about the safety of extended operation of Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station (Pilgrim). In particular, you requested that the NRC not grant the license renewal application filed by Pilgrim unless certain issues are more fully addressed. The issues raised in your letter include: the safety of wet storage for spent fuel rods; the adequacy of the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone; the lack of a credible comprehensive evacuation plan to evacuate residents of Cape Cod; and, the advisability of permitting Pilgrim to operate for an additional 20 years using old technology.

The Pilgrim license renewal proceeding is presently pending before an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (Licensing Board) and the Commission. Under Commission regulations, the Commission has an adjudicatory role in the Pilgrim license renewal proceeding. An appeal and a separate petition are currently pending before the Commission with respect to the license renewal proceeding. There are also additional issues pending before the Licensing Board, including one relating to the spent fuel wet storage, which may also come before the Commission. Due to the nature of the Commission's role, all members of the Commission must remain impartial while the case is pending. At this time, therefore, the Chairman cannot discuss or comment on the issues involved in this matter. The Chairman may, however, discuss the status of the proceeding and the performance of the facility in general.

A copy of your letter and this response will be served on the participants in the Pilgrim proceeding and will be referred to the Executive Director of Operations, William Borchardt, for review.

Sincerely,

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Andrew L. Bates  
Acting Secretary

cc: Pilgrim Service List