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MONETARY POLICY AND TRADE

BILL FOSTER

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
11TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

October 18, 2013

The Honorable Allison Macfarlane
Chairman
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop 016-G4
Washington DC 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Macfarlane:

I would like to thank you for your commitment to public service and your efforts to restore a cooperative and collegial decision-making process at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. I commend you for your commitment to openness, efficiency and transparency and encourage you to continue to actively engage stakeholders in the NRC's regulatory processes.

The commercial nuclear industry is responsible for managing the used fuel it generates and the NRC provides regulatory oversight to ensure safety. Thus, a timely and effective regulatory approach must be maintained to ensure continued safe storage of the nation's growing inventory of used nuclear fuel.

Given that there is currently 50,000 metric tons of used nuclear fuel temporarily stored in used nuclear fuel pools inside reactor facilities, the NRC's regulatory guidance on the management and storage of used fuel in pools must be based on well-established methods for nuclear criticality and safety analyses. Further, as reactor licensees often submit license amendment requests to enable them to make improvements to achieve more effective used nuclear fuel pool management, I know that we share a common concern that issues which have caused these reviews to become protracted, often taking longer than two years, be addressed.

I commend NRC for recognizing the need for improvements by developing an action plan, in 2010, to address regulatory enhancements to facilitate a more efficient licensing decision-making process. In addition, I understand that the NRC has recently approved a fee waiver to review a proposal by the industry to establish guidance for agreed upon methods for the performance of nuclear criticality safety analyses for used fuel pools.

I strongly encourage you to act to expeditiously work with industry to finalize the proposed guidance. This action is necessary to restore confidence in the agency's regulatory process for used nuclear fuel pool management.

Thank you again for your commitment to public service. I look forward to receiving future updates on your continued progress on this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Foster". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Foster
Member of Congress