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September 26, 2013

The Honorable Alison M. Macfarlane  
Chairman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O-16G4  
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Macfarlane:

As you know, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit recently granted a Writ of Mandamus requiring the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue its work on the licensing process for the Yucca Mountain facility in Nevada. I appreciate your willingness to follow NRC procedures in making a final determination on this issue and encourage you to follow through on that commitment by focusing the limited resources available to the NRC on completion of the Safety Evaluation Review (SER).

In the years since Yucca Mountain was chosen as the location as the permanent repository for high-level nuclear waste, there has been much debate about its adequacy to fill that role. When the license review process was shut down, NRC staff worked to complete one volume of the SER and completed technical evaluation reports without recommendations for three of the other four volumes.

I understand that the NRC does not currently have the funding needed to complete the entire licensing process for Yucca Mountain, and I am concerned that trying to restart every part of the licensing process would diminish available resources to limited ends. In previous testimony, NRC has estimated would take six to eight months and approximately \$6.5 million to complete the SER. I believe that working to complete the SER process, which represents a critical milestone for Yucca Mountain, would represent the most efficient use of the remaining unobligated funds and send a clear signal of NRC's good-faith efforts to move this process forward.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Price".

David Price  
Member of Congress



CHAIRMAN

UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

December 11, 2013

The Honorable David E. Price  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Price:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter of September 26, 2013, urging us to move forward with completion of the Safety Evaluation Report for the proposed geologic repository at Yucca Mountain.

Following the August 13, 2013, decision by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, the Commission issued an order requesting that the participants in the suspended adjudication provide their views on how the NRC should continue the licensing process. We received the views of the parties, including the NRC staff, on September 30. The staff also provided us with updated cost estimates to assist in determining how best to move forward with the remaining funds.

On November 18, 2013, the Commission issued an order concerning resumption of the Yucca Mountain licensing process. Among other things, it directed the staff to complete and issue the Safety Evaluation Report and requested that the U.S. Department of Energy prepare the supplemental environmental impact statement that the NRC staff has determined to be necessary to complete its environmental review of the application.

If you need any additional information, please contact me or Rebecca Schmidt, Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs, at (301) 415-1776.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allison M. Macfarlane", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Allison M. Macfarlane