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**ORGANIZATION
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December 2, 1996

VIA FAX

Mr. John C. Hoyle
Secretary of the Commission
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission
One White Flint North Building
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852



Dear Mr. Hoyle:

Organization Resources Counselors, Inc. (ORC) appreciates this opportunity, and is pleased to submit its comments on NRC's strategic assessment and rebaselining initiative.

ORC is a management consulting company that has provided specialized health, safety and environmental professional services to its members since shortly after the passage of the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. Working with approximately 130 Fortune 500 member companies in diverse industries, all of which have a strong commitment to employee safety and health, ORC addresses health and safety and environmental issues, including standards development, and compliance activities of federal and state government. ORC also works with companies in the planning and implementation of innovative health, safety and environmental programs.

Sincerely,

Frank A. White
Vice President

6. SPECIAL RECORDS SECTION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OF THE COMMISSION

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**ORGANIZATION RESOURCES COUNSELORS
COMMENTS
ON**

**THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION'S
STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT AND REBASELINING INITIATIVE**

Regulation and Licensing of Radioactive Material

NRC has an excellent record of managing and regulating the safe use of radioactive material in the United States. NRC staff members are highly competent in their areas of expertise. They are well informed on their regulations and provide valuable assistance when requested. Furthermore, they respond in a timely manner on licensing matters and urgent issues.

The Agreement State programs, by contrast, vary in quality and in content. Industries that conduct business in multiple states face frustrating reviews of numerous sets of regulations that are: (i) different; (ii) not as coherent as NRC's regulations; and (iii) possess requirements that are unique to individual States and in some cases more restrictive than NRC's regulations. The same company may be forced to develop multiple radiation protection programs on a state-by-state basis to address the differences in Agreement States and NRC regulations. Such discrepant requirements do not add value in any sense of the word -- they do not enhance the protection of the work force, the public, or the environment and they do not add value to the products that industries manufacture. If the Agreement States program is to continue, NRC should remain intact and ensure that programs are consistent in quality and in content from State-to-State. One set of regulations is more than sufficient for conducting operations safely within the United States.

In addition, it is not desirable to introduce a new agency such as EPA into the process of regulating radioactive materials. This would result in an extraordinary expenditure on the part of licensees to revise existing programs in response to new EPA requirements. Existing program requirements, as defined by NRC, are technically sound and protective when responsibly implemented. Introduction of a new agency at this time would be a non-value-added, inefficient and expensive exercise. This increased cost would be significant and would only result in inferior service for at least the foreseeable future.

Summary

In summary, ORC does not see any benefit in transferring control of radioactive materials or wastes from the NRC to the EPA. NRC has an excellent record of protecting the workplace, the public, and the environment from the hazards associated with the use of radioactive material. We feel that NRC should continue to set the direction for the radiation protection program in the United States and maintain a strong leadership role with the Agreement States to ensure competent and consistent regulation and enforcement. In addition, NRC should take a leadership role in the international community to establish sound policies and programs that are protective, consistent with those of the United States, and which enhance industry's ability to compete in foreign markets. We believe that NRC's resources and expertise would be of benefit if applied to the above issues.

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