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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY, NUCLEAR
PROLIFERATION AND FEDERAL SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

May 31, 1979

Honorable Joseph Hendrie
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Hendrie:

It has been brought to my attention that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has a need for rapid shipment of safeguards samples containing less than 0.1 to about 10 grams of plutonium. Ordinarily, 10 samples containing some 20 grams of plutonium might be shipped from a single facility in one shipment. However, under conditions of maximum usage, shipment from an individual facility would be only as high as 30 to 100 grams.

As you know, these quantities fall well below the amounts envisioned for airshipment of radioactive materials when the regulations governing the crash-worthiness of containers were formulated. This means that shipments must either be delayed or they must be sent in containers the bulk and weight of which far exceed the necessity of the amounts being transported.

Given these circumstances and the exigencies of the IAEA's safeguards program, I believe that a review of the crash-worthiness requirements for containers in which small quantities of radioactive materials are shipped is in order. To accomplish this, I would suggest the Department of Energy, the Department of Transportation and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission meet without delay to form an ad hoc group on the matter.

Please notify me at your earliest convenience of the steps you have taken to arrange this meeting. Additionally please keep me advised on the progress of the group.

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May 31, 1979

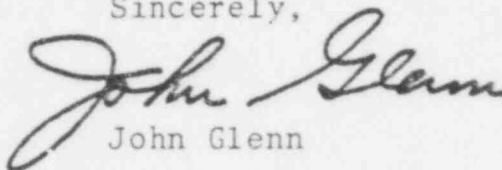
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In this regard, it would be most useful if an individual were designated to act as liaison with my staff. This individual should be in touch with Dr. Leonard Weiss, Staff Director of the Subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation and Federal Services or his designee.

I am notifying the other involved agencies by means of a similar letter.

Many thanks for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Glenn". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name "John Glenn".

John Glenn

JG/mlj

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