



## State of South Carolina

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Mr. Joseph M. Hendrie, Chairperson  
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dear Chairperson Hendrie:

I want to thank the Commission for keeping our State officials apprised of the incident at Three Mile Island. Your office of State Programs and the Region II Compliance Office in Atlanta were most helpful in this respect. We also appreciate your positive action in requiring further evaluation of safety features at operating reactors in South Carolina. The public demands this kind of responsive action.

We recognize, as you do, that a substantial amount of radioactive waste will be generated from the decontamination process at Three Mile Island (TMI); furthermore, that potential unscheduled shut-downs of reactors to assess systems and incorporate modifications based on the TMI experience could also produce quantities of low-level waste in excess of normal amounts for the industry.

As you are aware, we have in our State the only operating commercial low-level burial facility in the eastern half of the United States. I have met with my staff and Mr. Heyward Shealy of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control to review the current status of waste burial activities at the Chem-Nuclear facility in Barnwell, South Carolina.

Currently we are receiving approximately 90% of the low-level waste generated by operating power reactors, fuel fabricators, and institutional applications in this country. What was intended to be a regional facility to handle the low-level waste for the southeastern and southern region of the country has, in fact, become a "national" facility for virtually all the low-level commercial waste east of the Rocky Mountains. Finally, it is anticipated that for the first six months of this calendar year, shipments to the Chem-Nuclear facility will meet or exceed the monthly average (200,000 cubic feet/month) based on our total annual volume limitation.

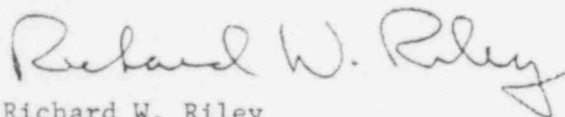
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Based on these considerations, I have concluded that our volume limitations for the Chem-Nuclear facility should be lowered. Under these circumstances, it is my opinion that our waste management program can not accomodate the excess wastes from TMI or from any of the unscheduled reactor shut-downs.

The accident at TMI has only served to reinforce the need for a national low-level waste management plan based on a regional network of low-level burial sites. I urge the Commission to take the lead in developing such a national plan, and we in South Carolina stand ready to participate, along with the other states, in this process. As in the case of high-level commercial wastes, this is a national problem which requires a national solution.

Sincerely,



Richard W. Riley

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cc: Members of the S.C. Congressional Delegation  
Secretary James Schlesinger  
Harold R. Denton, NRC  
Governor John Evans, Chairperson  
Subcommittee on Nuclear Power, NGA

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