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The Honorable Delbert L. Latta
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Latta:

We have been asked to reply to your November 22 letter to Chairman Hendrie enclosing recent letters to you from Mr. Thomas J. Hanley and Ms. Elisabeth Seggaard; we appreciate having the opportunity to comment on them.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is an independent agency established to assure that, if nuclear power is used to produce electricity, the public health and safety and the environment are protected. The procedures we use for doing this are described in the booklet "Licensing of Nuclear Power Reactors"--two copies are enclosed.

Toledo Edison Company is licensed to operate one power reactor at the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station and has applied for permits to build two more units at the same site. The application--as were the applications to build and operate Unit 1--is being reviewed according to the procedures described in the booklet.

The staff has completed its review of environmental impact and site suitability matters and a public hearing has been held on these issues. As a result, the Licensing Board has authorized, and the staff has issued, a Limited Work Authorization. This means that Toledo Edison can conduct limited construction work--at its own risk--on the two new units pending completion of the construction permit proceeding.

The staff presently is reviewing the safety matters related to the application and that review will be followed by a review by the independent Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards. The public hearing then will be reconvened and, when it is completed, the Licensing Board will make a final decision on the application for construction permits.

One of the requirements a utility must meet before it can be licensed to operate a nuclear power plant is to have an emergency plan--approved by the NRC staff--for coping with accidental releases of radioactivity to the environment in case of a hypothetical accident. The requirements governing these plans are described in Appendix E to Part 50 of our regulations and in Regulatory Guide 1.101; we are enclosing two copies of each.

In addition, these utilities are required to make arrangements with the appropriate State and local authorities to take emergency actions away from the reactor site if necessary. In this regard, the NRC is the lead

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Government agency for assisting individual States in developing radiological emergency plans. A checklist of necessary elements which should be contained in these plans is set forth in a basic NRC guidance document, NUREG-75/111. Again, we are enclosing two copies.

It is our belief that, properly regulated, nuclear power is one of the safe, environmentally compatible means available to us for helping meet this country's energy requirements. A more detailed discussion of the way we assure that nuclear power plants are built and operated safely and that their impact on the environment is minimal is contained in our most recent Annual Report to Congress, and we are enclosing two copies of this report should you wish to use them in replying to Mr. Hanley and Ms. Segard.

We hope that this information is helpful to you in replying to these letters. However, if you do need additional information, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Joseph J. Fouchard
Acting Director
Office of Public Affairs

Enclosures:

1. Licensing of Nuclear Power Reactors (2)
2. Appendix E to Part 50 (2)
3. Regulatory Guide 1.101 (2)
4. NUREG 75/111 (2)
5. 1976 Annual Report (2)

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