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WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE
ASSEMBLY CHAMBER
MADISON
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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
46th Assembly District
Dane County

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Social Services*
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on Welfare Reform

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Committee on Energy
Committee on
Environmental Protection
Steering Committee,
Health Planning Council

August 20, 1980

Commissioner John F. Ahearne
Commissioner Victor Gilinski
Commissioner Joseph M. Hendrie
Commissioner Peter A. Bradford



Commissioner's Office
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

DOCKET NUMBER **50-266**
PROD. & UTIL. FAC.

Dear Commissioners,

Faced with the primary role of assuring safety in the operation of nuclear powered electrical generating facilities, I believe it is paramount that the Commission immediately order a full scale adjudicatory hearing on the safety concerns resulting from steam generator tube degradation.

Beginning in August of 1979, Point Beach I, one of Wisconsin's nuclear power plants, began to experience runaway corrosion of the facility's steam generator tubes.

According to documents filed with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission, 97 of the unit's 6,250 tubes required plugging due to corrosion on August 5, 1979. Four more required plugging several days later. But the worst corrosion occurred from October 5, 1979 through August, 1980. A total of 299 tubes became inoperable.

The possible effect of steam generator tube failure on the emergency core cooling system of nuclear reactors has been a safety issue raised by NRC staff and independent studies for quite some time now. Yet nothing has been done.

The Commission's decision in May, 1980 to delegate the issue of tube degradation to an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board was also woefully inadequate. By limiting the issues under investigation in such a manner to specifically exclude the very safety issues which were of concern, the Commission has effectively abdicated its responsibilities to assure safety in the operation of our state's nuclear power plants.

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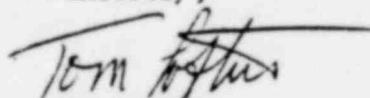
NRC

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Currently, the Wisconsin Department of Justice at the request of Governor Lee Dreyfus has joined in support of an adjudicatory hearing on these safety issues. I urge the Commission to reconsider its earlier order excluding these safety issues from any hearing, and to approve a rigorous and detailed examination of the tube degradation problem in the form of an adjudicatory hearing. The issue demands this because of its seriousness. The public deserves this because of its concerns regarding the continued safe operation of nuclear powered electrical generating plants in our state.

Sincerely,


TOM LOFTIS
State Representative

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cc: Wisconsin Environmental Decade