



BILL CLINTON
GOVERNOR

DOCKET NUMBER
PROPOSED RULE

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Arkansas DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

4815 WEST MARKHAM STREET • LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72205
TELEPHONE AC 501 661-2400

M. JOYCELYN ELDERS, M.D.
DIRECTOR

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OFFICE OF SECRETARY
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January 22, 1990

Secretary
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Attn: Docketing & Service Branch

Ref: Notice of NRC Proposed Rule Making: *ASNT Certification of Industrial Radiographers

The Arkansas Radiation Control Program offers the following comments on the proposed rule making.

A few years ago, many of the Agreement States encouraged the NRC to pursue rule making relative to industrial radiography. When that rule making did not occur, the State of Texas took the initiative to establish a comprehensive set of regulations to address several concerns noted with this use of radioactive material. These regulations included a testing/certification program, but also focused on other safety issues. While the evaluation of the Texas program is preliminary, there is strong suggestion that it is reducing exposures. It also appears that a certification program alone is not the paramount reason for exposure reduction. A discussion of these points is contained in a letter to Mr. Harold Denton, Director of the NRC's office of Government and Public Affairs from Mr. Dave Lacker, Director of the Texas Bureau of Radiation Control, dated January 9, 1990.

While the NRC's proposed rule on certification signifies rekindled interest by the NRC in radiography regulations, it falls far short of what may be needed to increase radiation safety in the industry, and worse, may actually divert attention from more pertinent safety issues. We concur with the position of the State of Texas as described in Mr. Lacker's letter to Mr. Denton and urge the Commission to reconsider the proposed rule.

Finally, we reiterate a statement made in the letter from the Organization of Agreement States to Chairman Carr, dated November 16, 1989. Rules that are to become matters of compatibility for the states should be developed in close cooperation with the states through some type of joint rule making effort.

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This is particularly true for radiography in that as the Agreement States have the concentration of radiography licensees, we have developed the commensurate level of regulatory experience. The expertise derived from this experience should be utilized.

Sincerely,

Bernard Bevilacqua

Greta J. Dicus, Director
Division of Radiation Control & Emergency Management

GJD:ji

cc: Carlton Kammerer