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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION,
REFUGEES AND INTERNATIONAL LAW
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY
DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATIONS
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

Dr. Nunzio J. Palladino, Chairman
The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Dr. Palladino:

As representatives of regions which could be endangered by an accident at the Indian Point nuclear power station, we have become increasingly concerned over the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's inaction with respect to high-population reactor sites in general, and Indian Point in particular.

It was our understanding that, after the accident at Three Mile Island, the Commission had committed itself to giving special consideration to problems arising out of the extraordinary societal risk posed by the nation's most densely populated reactor sites. Yet we have seen little evidence of late that sites like Indian Point and Zion are being given priority attention by the NRC.

The Indian Point site, with more than double the population of any other in the country, is of particular concern to us. Should a major radiation release occur at that facility, millions of our constituents could be at risk.

It is now more than one year since the Commission, in response to a petition from the Union of Concerned Scientists, announced (on May 29, 1980) its intention to conduct an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board adjudication on the Indian Point nuclear power plants.

We had expected that a full investigation of safety and siting issues would have been expedited by the Commission. Instead, the Indian Point hearings have been delayed because of the Commission's failure to constitute a hearing board. Responding to a request for an explanation of this delay from members of the New York Congressional Delegation, former Chairman Joseph P. Hendrie, on April 27, 1981, indicated that the Commissioners were unable to reach a consensus on appointments to that board.

We urge you, in your capacity as Chairman, to give priority to the early appointment of an Indian Point ASLB Chairman and board.

Furthermore, we encourage you to give serious attention to the matter of emergency planning at Indian Point. We are deeply concerned that some four months after the NRC's deadline for the implementation of emergency procedures, Indian Point is still operating without workable and implemented off-site emergency plans to protect the public in the event of an accident.

Sincerely,



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cc: John F. Ahearne, Commissioner
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