



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555-0001

CFD

February 3, 1994

The Honorable Richard H. Lehman, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
Committee on Natural Resources
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed for the information of the subcommittee is a copy of a final rule to be published in the Federal Register that contains amendments to 10 CFR Part 55. Section 306 of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (NWPA) of 1982 directed the NRC to promulgate regulations or other appropriate guidance to establish "simulator training requirements . . . and . . . requirements governing NRC administration of requalification examinations." On May 26, 1987, the NRC amended 10 CFR Part 55 to require each licensed operator to pass a comprehensive requalification written examination and an operating test conducted by the NRC during the term of the operator's 6-year license as a prerequisite for license renewal.

At the time the regulation was amended, the Commission did not have confidence that each facility would conduct its required annual operating tests and written examinations in accordance with the Commission's expectations. That lack of confidence was due to the implementation of new aspects of the operator requalification program with which neither the NRC nor the industry had very much experience. Therefore, the Commission determined that during the term of a 6-year license, the staff would conduct individual operator requalification examinations for the purpose of license renewal. As a result of conducting this examination, the staff has determined that the existing regulations have established a high standard of licensee performance and that the NRC examiners are largely duplicating tasks already required of, and routinely performed by, the facility licensees.

The final rule will delete the requirement that each licensed operator at power, test, and research reactors pass a comprehensive requalification written examination and an operating test conducted by the NRC during the term of the operator's 6-year license as a prerequisite for license renewal. The amendment will require facility licensees to submit, upon request consistent with the Commission's inspection program needs, a copy of its requalification written examinations or annual operating tests to the Commission for review. In addition, the final rule will amend the "Scope" provisions of the regulations pertaining to operators' licenses to include facility licensees.

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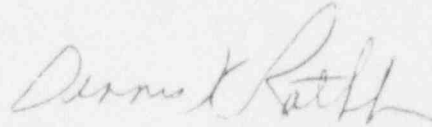
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The Honorable Richard H. Lehman

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The staff believes that operational safety at each facility will be improved by directing its examiners to inspect and oversee facility requalification programs rather than conducting requalification examinations. By redirecting the examiner resources, the staff expects to find and correct programmatic weaknesses earlier and thus improve operational safety.

Sincerely,



Dennis K. Rathbun, Director
Office of Congressional Affairs

Enclosure:
Notice of Final Rulemaking

cc: Representative Barbara Vucanovich



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555-0001

February 3, 1994

The Honorable Philip R. Sharp, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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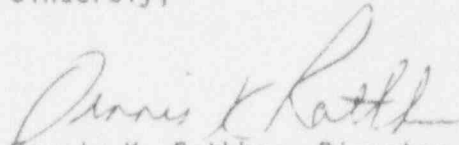
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The Honorable Philip R. Sharp

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Sincerely,



Dennis K. Rathbun, Director
Office of Congressional Affairs

Enclosure:
Notice of Final Rulemaking

cc: Representative Michael Bilirakis



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

February 3, 1994

The Honorable Joseph Lieberman, Chairman
Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Regulation
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

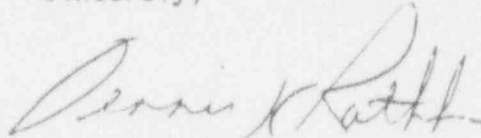
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dennis K. Rathbun".

Dennis K. Rathbun, Director
Office of Congressional Affairs

Enclosure:
Notice of Final Rulemaking

cc: Senator Alan K. Simpson

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Sincerely,

Original signed by/

Dennis K. Rathbun, Director
Office of Congressional Affairs

Enclosure:
Notice of Final Rulemaking

cc: Representative Michael Bilirakis

Distribution: [CONGLTR.FNL]
Subj-circ-chron
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DRathbun,
EBeckjord
CHeltemes
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ADiPalo

*see previous concurrences

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Offc:	D:RES	OCA <i>[Signature]</i>
Name:	EBeckjord*	DRathbun
Date:	11/23/93	2/3/93

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