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Mr. James Holloway, Jr.
Office of the Controller
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Holloway:

I am writing to express my concern about the financial burden the recent Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) proposal to increase user fees for uranium facilities will place on the highly vulnerable U.S. uranium industry.

As you may know, Title X, Subtitle B, of the Energy Policy Act of 1992, required the Department of Energy (DOE) to establish programs and initiate actions to help revitalize the domestic uranium industry. As Director of DOE's Uranium Revitalization Program, I have become acutely aware of the difficulties facing the once-strong domestic uranium industry. In 1980, the United States was the largest uranium producer in the world, able to meet all its own requirements. Today, U.S. nuclear powerplants rely on uranium imports to meet more than 70 percent of their needs, and employment in the domestic industry has dropped from 22,000 in 1980 to less than 1,000.

While I realize that NRC must consider many factors when setting or revising fees, I hope you will include consideration of the EPACT uranium industry revitalization goal in your decision making. If you should have any questions, I may be reached at (301) 903-5922.

Sincerely,

Robert M. George, Director
Enrichment Oversight and
Uranium Revitalization Division
Office of Uranium Programs
Office of Nuclear Energy

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