



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

June 4, 1984

The Honorable Bob Whittaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Whittaker:

This letter is in response to your correspondence of April 13, 1984 concerning the cancellation of a Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) caseload forecast meeting at the Wolf Creek Generating Station. The meeting was cancelled because the NRC engineering specialist most familiar with the caseload forecast process had resigned, effective April 28, 1984, and his efforts were needed to help finalize recent caseload estimates prior to his departure. The caseload visit to Wolf-Creek was conducted on May 24, 1984.

The NRC performs the caseload forecast process solely for its internal resource planning purposes and will continue to utilize this process as required. As in the past, caseload forecast meetings will be publicly announced and the results will also be made available to the public. As in the past, caseload forecast meetings will be publicly announced and the results will also be made available to the public.

The Commission believes that the Caseload Forecast Panel serves a valuable function which should be continued.

Commissioner Gilinsky adds:

"I urge you to support this valuable function because it has been a step-child at the NRC and is in danger of being eliminated altogether. The Caseload Forecast Panel has, for several years, been the only reliable method we had to judge the credibility of the utilities' construction completion dates upon which we based our own licensing and inspection schedules. Bill Lovelace, the engineering specialist who has just resigned and who was the backbone of the Panel, relied upon inspection of construction sites rather than utility reports to estimate the progress of construction. The accuracy of his estimates often brought the NRC into conflict with those utilities which were still predicting much earlier completion dates. To avoid such conflict, the NRC halted the Panel's visits for a substantial part of 1982. And when the Panel was again allowed to operate, the agency tended to downplay their findings and use instead the utilities' construction completion dates for scheduling purposes. As a result, public utility commissions were equally uninformed. I expect that the failure in information during that crucial period will end up costing the public a great deal of money."

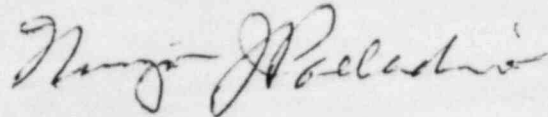
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The Honorable Bob Whittaker

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Commissioner Asselstine agrees with Commissioner Gilinsky that in the past, the Caseload Forecast Panel has not received the support within the NRC staff that its important function deserves and that, without assistance from the Commission itself and from outside the Agency, there is a danger that the effectiveness of the Panel could be weakened or lost.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nunzio J. Palladino".

Nunzio J. Palladino