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

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SOCIAL

To whom it may concern:

I strongly urge you not to accept any proposal which would lessen the involvement of local citizens and government in emergency evacuation planning around a nuclear power plant. I was in high school in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania at the time of the 1979 Three Mile Island accident, and I remember clearly the confusion and fear--even though we were not officially evacuated--in our decisions of whether, and where, to go.

Now I work every day in New York City, where I am close enough to be caught once again in that confusion and fear should the Shoreham plant be started and be involved in an accident. In that event, it will be difficult enough to evacuate all of Long Island toward Manhattan (where rush hour can turn a two-mile trip into two hours) when there are evacuation plans that have been thought out and approved and understood by local authorities and citizens. I am convinced that there could be no effective evacuation when residents must follow the self-serving plans of a utility owner.

Frankly, given my experience, I doubt I will ever feel safe when I'm living near an operating reactor. But one step toward making me--and others--feel safer would be your adherence to current regulations: an evacuation plan that is locally approved, and the strict maintenance of a 10- (or more) mile evacuation zone.

The number of "minor" accidents, or "unusual events," that have occurred at reactors around the country in the years since Three Mile Island don't say a lot for the quality of plant construction or the competence of plant operators and administrators. Please don't compromise safety even further by gutting emergency planning.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Carolyn L. Kitch