



CHAIRMAN

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

March 21, 1988

The Honorable Robert J. Dole
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Dole:

On February 17, 1988, the Commission, in responding to your letter of December 22, 1987, provided comments on your suggestion that the Atomic Energy Act be amended to provide for certain decisions on emergency planning for nuclear power plants to be made prior to the issuance of a construction permit. Subsequently, your staff requested clarification of our comments.

In its response, the Commission noted that your proposal would help assure a definite, although preliminary, judgment on the adequacy of emergency planning prior to the construction of a nuclear power plant and stated that this was a commendable goal. The Commission also indicated that your proposal would not necessarily eliminate the possibility of controversy or litigation over emergency planning at completed nuclear power plants, but by pointing out this limitation we did not mean to suggest that the proposal therefore lacked merit. In fact, although the proposal would not eliminate the possibility of emergency planning controversy or litigation at the operating license review stage, it should, in our judgment, decrease the likelihood of either of these by helping to focus attention on basic emergency planning issues at the construction permit review stage, when basic plant siting decisions are made.

The Commission very much appreciates your interest in this matter. We will be pleased to provide additional information or assistance at your request.

Sincerely,

Lando W. Zech Jr.
Lando W. Zech, Jr.

8804130206 880321
PDR COMMS NRCC
CORRESPONDENCE PDR



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

March 21, 1988

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Lloyd Bentsen
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bentsen:

I am responding to your letter of March 4, 1988, concerning the granting of a full-power operating license for the South Texas Project (STP), Unit 1, and the status of the NRC investigation of allegations received from the Government Accountability Project (GAP). The NRC Safety Significance Assessment Team (SSAT) Report on allegations related to the South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2, (NUREG-1306) has just been published and a copy was provided to your office on March 14, 1988. The NRC staff has identified no substantive safety issues that would warrant delay in the NRC's consideration of a full power license for STP, Unit 1.

The Commission takes very seriously its responsibility to determine whether the South Texas Project, Unit 1 meets our requirements for a full-power operating license. To this end, the Commission will consider all facts related to the plant's construction and readiness for operation, including the SSAT report.

You have requested that the NRC staff's evaluation of the allegations be made available to the public before the Commission makes a licensing decision on the plant. We have distributed copies of NUREG-1306 to interested persons and organizations and have placed a copy in our Public Document Room in Washington, D.C. A copy is also being placed in our local Public Document Room near the STP site. The NRC will, of course, seriously consider any new concerns that may arise with respect to STP, Unit 1.

The public meeting originally scheduled on March 10 has been rescheduled for 2:00 p.m. on Monday, March 21, 1988. At this meeting, the Commission will be briefed by the staff on its conclusions and recommendations on the issuance of a full-power licensed for the STP, Unit 1 facility. The Commissioners will have the opportunity to question the staff's position and the

conclusions it reached in NUREG-1306. I can assure you that the Commission will not act on the STP license unless it is fully satisfied that the public health and safety are adequately protected.

I hope this information will assist you in your review of the South Texas Project license proceeding.

Sincerely,

Lando W. Zeck Jr.
Lando W. Zeck, Jr.

D BENTSEN
TEXAS

COMMITTEES
FINANCE
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
JOINT ECONOMIC
JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 4, 1988

Honorable Lando W. Zech, Jr.
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Zech:

It is my understanding that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has scheduled an open meeting for March 10, 1988 to consider recommendations on whether to grant to the South Texas Nuclear Power Project (STNP) a full operating license. I am also aware that the NRC undertook an investigation into allegations of numerous safety violations at that plant in January of this year. To my knowledge, the results of this investigation, in the form of a full safety report, have not yet been made known or available to the public. Accordingly, I would like to urge the NRC to release its report prior to the time any recommendations are made on whether STNP should be granted a full operating license.

The merits of the issue of whether the plant should be granted a license must be determined by the NRC in the first and last instance. I believe, however, that it would be in the public interest for the agency to respond in an official manner to the various safety allegations made about STNP. I am sure that you would agree that public confidence in the safety of the plant may depend, in large measure, on the NRC report. Thus, it is very important that the NRC's safety evaluation be widely disseminated, and that an ample opportunity be given for the public to digest its contents before dispositive action is taken with regard to licensing issues.

I appreciate the attention that you and your staff have always given my concerns.

Sincerely yours,


Lloyd Bentsen

3/8..To EDO to Prepare Response for ~~EDO's~~ Signature..

~~8803300278~~ /P Date due: March 21..OCA to Ack, Docket, RF..88-0181



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

March 21, 1988

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Henry R. Gonzalez
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Gonzalez:

This is in response to your letters of February 18 and March 17, 1988, in which you expressed concern about the safety of the South Texas Project and requested that a special investigation be performed before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) considers licensing the plant. Your concerns are specifically directed toward the manner in which the NRC has investigated allegations received through the Government Accountability Project (GAP).

I would like to assure you that the GAP allegations have been investigated extensively and in detail. Following the Court decision denying enforcement of the subpoena for South Texas safety allegations, members of the NRC staff have worked cooperatively with representatives of the Government Accountability Project (GAP) to establish a means for obtaining as much information as possible on allegations made about construction deficiencies at the South Texas Project and to protect the identities of those individuals who wanted to remain anonymous. Once a framework for meeting these objectives was established, with GAP's full knowledge, the staff proceeded to obtain specific information regarding the allegations. Technical experts reviewed all of the information made available by GAP, including documents and tapes of interviews with individuals. GAP arranged, and NRC staff conducted, separate interviews to obtain more information from some of those who had made allegations. Following this, the staff conducted an inspection at the South Texas site to determine the safety significance of the allegations. The site inspection was completed during the week of January 18, 1988. A copy of the report prepared by the site inspection team and published as NUREG-1306, on March 14, 1988, has been provided to your staff. This report explains why staff believes its inspection has addressed all safety concerns raised in the GAP allegations. The report concludes that "... the review of all the GAP allegations has identified no substantive safety issue that would warrant delay in the Commission's consideration of a full-power license for the South Texas Project, Unit 1."

In your March 17, 1988 letter, you specifically expressed concerns, based on your review of the site inspection report, that certain wrongdoing issues, which were referred to the Office of Investigations for complete evaluation, had not been adequately addressed to allow a licensing decision. The site inspection team did, however, review each of these allegations to determine their safety significance. Any matter which had safety significance was included within the allegations evaluated by the site inspection team. Many of these wrongdoing allegations involved no safety content, however. They

dealt with such things as wasted money, theft, personnel matters, and drug testing. Furthermore, in reviewing all of these allegations for safety significance, the inspection team identified no trends or patterns indicative of management breakdown in ensuring the quality of the South Texas installation.

The Commission has scheduled a public meeting to consider a full-power operating license for South Texas Unit 1 on March 21, 1988 at 2:00 p.m. During the meeting, the staff will brief the Commission on its findings regarding the safety significance of the GAP allegations.

I hope this information will resolve your concerns about the safety of the South Texas Project.

Sincerely,

Lando W. Zech, Jr.
Lando W. Zech, Jr.

HENRY B. GONZALEZ
20TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

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ZONE WHIP
TEXAS DEMOCRATIC DELEGATION
HOUSE MAJORITY WHIP ORGANIZATION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 17, 1988

COMMITTEES
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CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND COINAGE
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS SUPERVISION,
REGULATION AND INSURANCE
SMALL BUSINESS
SUBCOMMITTEES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATION
AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

FILE REF.

B9:dsf

Mr. Lando W. Zech, Jr.
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Zech:

I am writing to reiterate my concerns about the safety of the South Texas Nuclear Plant (STNP) and to request that the licensing hearing scheduled for March 21, 1988, be postponed.

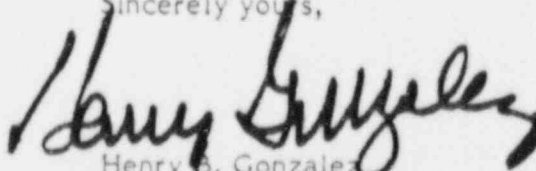
Since I wrote to you on February 18th expressing my reservations about the safety of the STNP, I have had an opportunity to review the NRC Safety Assessment Team Report which was released on March 14th. While this report addresses some of the safety related allegations made by the Government Accountability Project (GAP), the report does not address all of these allegations. Most significantly, the report does not address the allegations that workers at the plant were discouraged from reporting safety concerns during the construction of the plant and that documents were falsified. Instead, these allegations, and other allegations of harassment, intimidation, and wrongdoing, are being investigated by the NRC Office of Investigations (OI). The OI investigation has not been completed.

Because the allegations of harassment, intimidation and wrongdoing reflect adversely on the safety inspection and quality assurance programs relied upon by the NRC Safety Assessment Team, I question the propriety of proceeding with the licensing of the STNP at this time. Until the OI investigation is complete, serious questions remain about the safety of the STNP.

Again, I urge the NRC to delay the licensing of the plant until all safety concerns have been addressed.

With all good wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,



Henry B. Gonzalez
Member of Congress

3/21..To Chairman's Office for Appropriate Action..Cpys to: RF..
88-0237

~~88-0329-0033~~ 1p

HENRY B. GONZALEZ
30TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

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ZOMBIE WHIP
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

February 18, 1988

COMMITTEES
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INSTITUTIONS SUPERVISION
REGULATION AND INSURANCE
SMALL BUSINESS
SUBCOMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST
IMPACT OF DEREGULATION
AND PRIVATIZATION

B9/dsf

Mr. Lando W. Zech, Jr.
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Zech:

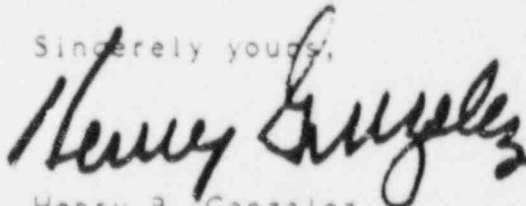
I am writing to express my grave concern with the safety of the South Texas Nuclear Plant (STNP) and to request that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) conduct a special investigation of the safety of the STNP before the NRC licenses the plant.

I understand that over 400 allegations regarding the safety of the STNP have been made to the Government Accountability Project (GAP). In turn, GAP reported these allegations to the NRC and the builder of the STNP, Bechtel. However, when the NRC investigated these allegations it examined only 60 of the allegations and spent only four days at the plant.

The safety allegations raised are serious and merit more extensive study. The NRC should investigate these allegations in detail before proceeding to license the plant. Moreover, allegations that inspection reports were falsified and that Bechtel employees were discouraged from reporting possible safety violations must be investigated before the NRC can rely on the builder's documentation regarding safety.

I urge the NRC to conduct a full investigation of the allegations regarding safety reported by the GAP and to delay licensing the STNP until the investigation has been completed and all safety concerns addressed.

Sincerely yours,



Henry B. Gonzalez
Member of Congress

2/24..To EDO to Prepare Response for Chairman's Signature
Date due Comm: Mar 9..OCA to Ack, RF, Docket...88-0151

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