



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

May 27, 1988

The Honorable Gerry E. Studds  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congress... Studds:

I am responding to your letter of May 9, 1988, in which you expressed concern about remarks recently made by two NRC Commissioners regarding resumption of operations at the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant. I assure you that the Commission has not made a decision on Pilgrim's restart and will not do so until the issues are addressed to our satisfaction.

The remarks of Commissioners Rogers and Carr need to be viewed in the context in which they were made. The two Commissioners had just completed tours of the site and each indicated that, based upon what they had observed of the physical condition of the Pilgrim facility, there appeared to be no major impediments to Pilgrim restart. Commissioner Carr's visit was his second to the site, and his remarks reflected his impression of the improvements in the plant since his first visit in May 1986. Commissioner Rogers' comments on his visit were provided in a separate letter to you. In making their statements, the Commissioners were fully aware that the staff had yet to complete a detailed evaluation of the multiple issues which will be considered thoroughly by the Commission in a restart decision.

Visits to the plant by Commissioners are but one part of our extensive efforts to evaluate the acceptability of Pilgrim's restart. In fact, such visits are responsive to the requests of Senator Kennedy and others that the Commissioners see the plant for themselves. Nonetheless, despite the physical appearance, the Commissioners do not believe that the plant can be considered fully ready for restart at this time. Technical, emergency planning, and management issues need to be resolved by Boston Edison before the staff recommends to the Commission any action on Pilgrim's restart.

Boston Edison is addressing unresolved items and is in the process of completing its own readiness assessment. The NRC staff will shortly commence a detailed site review and make an assessment regarding Boston Edison's readiness to resume operation of the Pilgrim facility. Boston Edison and the staff are currently scheduled to brief the Commission on the status of the restart issues on June 9, 1988. Another meeting is planned later this year at which the Commission will consider a restart decision. Other NRC-sponsored meetings will be held locally prior to the restart decision to discuss issues bearing on restart.

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PDR COMMS NRCC  
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You requested information on the status of our evaluation of the Direct Torus Vent System (DTVS). The Mark I containment system at Pilgrim meets established NRC requirements. The DTVS is an alternative system proposed by the licensee. The DTVS system installation at Pilgrim is not currently operational. The staff reviewed the proposed DTVS system and inspected the installation of the DTVS piping and found that neither the DTVS piping installation nor the system's operation must be addressed before restart. Because the NRC is awaiting the licensee's response to a series of questions regarding operation of the DTVS, I am not able at this time to provide a schedule for the completion of the DTVS operability review. As stated in my letter of November 24, 1987, the NRC staff's evaluation of the operation of the DTVS will determine the need for an environmental assessment.

I appreciate your continuing interest in this matter and hope that this letter will resolve your concerns.

Sincerely,

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



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EDO Principal Correspondence Control

**ACTION**

FROM:

DUE: 05/26<sup>17</sup>/88

EDO CONTROL: 0003693  
DOC DT: 05/09/88  
FINAL REPLY:

Rep. Gerry E. Studds

TO:

Chairman Zech

FOR SIGNATURE OF:

\*\* PRI \*\*

CRC NO: 88-0433

Chairman Zech

DESC:

ROUTING:

RESTART OF PILGRIM

Stello  
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DATE: 05/12/88

ASSIGNED TO:

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NRR

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SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Ref. EDO 3236

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