

DOCKET NUMBER
PROPOSED RULE

PR

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1584

(53 FR 16435)

June 23, 1988

DOCKET
US-NRC

'88 JUN 24 P2:55

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

OFFICE OF REGULATORY
DOCKETING & SERVICE
BRANCH

Dear Chairman Zech:

We the undersigned support the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's proposed interpretive rule change to 10 CFR 50.47 (d), Emergency Planning and Preparedness Requirements for Nuclear Power Plant Fuel Loading and Initial Low Power Operations, clarifying the Commission's emergency planning requirements for commercial nuclear power plants prior to low-power testing.

Specifically, we support the proposed rule clarification with regard to the need for offsite emergency warning siren systems at the low-power testing level. It is clear that low-power testing operations pose no potential threat to public health and safety.

Moreover, we are also aware of the situation involving the Seabrook project, where the plant's owners have made several good faith efforts to install prompt notification systems in the Massachusetts communities within 10 miles of the plant, only to see those efforts thwarted, for political reasons, by anti-nuclear activists and local government entities. We are concerned that similar actions at any of our nation's other 109 nuclear power plants could jeopardize their continued operation.

Since commercial nuclear power plants now generate almost 20 percent of our electric energy, the national business community believes it is extremely important for the United States to maintain the nuclear option. Without adequate electric supplies, the United States faces a loss of jobs and productivity, as well as a threat to our national security.

Furthermore, Congress in 1980 specifically empowered the NRC to oversee the licensing and operation of commercial nuclear power plants, and we believe it is vitally important for the federal government to maintain control of the nuclear power plant licensing process. State and local governments must not be allowed to thwart this process by non-cooperation or deliberate obstructionism.

This proposed rule clarification does not lessen the very important safeguards that the NRC has put in place to ensure safe operation of the nation's nuclear plants, while at the same time it does clear up an apparent point of confusion over pre-operational planning requirements. We fully support such important and productive Commission initiatives.

Sincerely,

National Association of Manufacturers

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

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