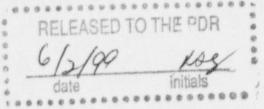


UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 25, 1999



The Honorable Frank Murkowski, Chairman Committee on Energy and Natural Resources United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to inform you that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff has completed another milestone in its interaction with the Department of Energy's (DOE) program to produce tritium in a commercial light water reactor. The staff has issued its safety evaluation report (SER) on the DOE topical report on the tritium production core.

Many technical issues have been satisfactorily addressed in the DOE topical report, according to the staff review. The topical report and the staff's SER should prove to be useful reference documents for a licensee preparing a specific license amendment request for authorization to irradiate a full-core load of tritium-producing burnable absorber rods in a particular reactor facility. In addition, the NRC staff review has identified several plant-specific interface issues and potential technical specification changes to be addressed in the license amendment application.

The NRC intends to continue to provide focused attention to DOE's tritium production needs and intends to carry out an expeditious and thorough review of any license amendments submitted by the Tennessee Valley Authority for production of tritium in the Watts Bar and Sequoyah plants.

Sincerely,

Shirley Ann Jackson

Shirley and John

cc: Senator Jeff Bingaman

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May 25, 1999

The Honorable John Warner, Chairman Committee on Armed Services United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

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Sincerely,

Shirley Ann Jackson

Shirley and

cc: Senator Carl Levin



May 25, 1999

The Honorable Joe L. Barton, Chairman Subcommittee on Energy and Power Committee on Commerce United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Shirley Ann Jackson

Shirley ann John

cc: Representative Ralph M. Hall



UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 25, 1999

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici, Chairman Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development Committee on Appropriations United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Sincerely,

Shirley Ann Jackson

cc: Senator Harry Reid



May 25, 1999

The Honorable Ron Packard, Chairman Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development Committee on Appropriations United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

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Shirley Ann Jackson

cc: Representative Peter J. Visclosky



UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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May 25, 1999

The Honorable Floyd Spence, Chairman Committee on Armed Services United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

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Sincerely,

Shirley Ann Jackson

cc: Representative Ike Skelton



May 25, 1999

The Honorable James M. Inhofe, Chairman Subcommittee on Clean Air, Wetlands, Private Property and Nuclear Safety Committee on Environment and Public Works United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to inform you that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff has completed another milestone in its interaction with the Department of Energy's (DOE) program to produce tritium in a commercial light water reactor. The staff has issued its safety evaluation report (SER) on the DOE topical report on the tritium production core.

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Shirley Ann Jackson

Shirley am John

cc: Senator Bob Graham



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May 25, 1999

The Honorable John Chafee, Chairman Committee on Environment and Public Works United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

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Shirley Ann Jackson

cc: Senator Max Baucus



May 25, 1999

The Honorable Bill Richardson Secretary of Energy Washington, D.C. 20585

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cc: Stephen M. Sohinki