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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

July 22, 1999

The Honorable Norman R. Stone, Jr.
Maryland Senate
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear Mr. Stone:

I am responding to your letter to Chairman Jackson of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) of June 30, 1999, in which you refer to a letter from the New 7th Democratic Civic Club, Inc. In its letter, the Club expresses support of the renewal application of Baltimore Gas and Electric Company for the Calvert Cliffs plants as well as concerns about the lack of specificity related to the regulatory specifications for license renewal and the length of time set aside for public comment.

Enclosed is the NRC staff's response to Mr. William Batton, President of the New 7th Democratic Civic Club, Inc. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

Enclosure: As stated

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

July 20, 1999

Mr. William C. Batton, President
The New 7th Democratic Civic Club, Inc.
1936 Merritt Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21222-4628

Dear Mr. Batton:

I am responding to your letter to Chairman Jackson of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), of June 24, 1999, in which you express your support for the renewal of the operating licenses for Baltimore Gas and Electric Company's (BG&E) Calvert Cliffs plants. In your letter, you also voice your belief that the Commission's regulations for license renewal lack specificity and state your concern about the length of time set aside for public comment.

BG&E submitted a license renewal application for its two Calvert Cliffs plants, which is the first such application, in April 1998. The NRC staff issued a safety evaluation report on the application in March 1999. The safety evaluation report contained a number of open and confirmatory items that BG&E responded to in a letter to the NRC dated July 2, 1999. The staff is reviewing BG&E's response and plans to issue a final safety evaluation in November 1999. On February 24, 1999, the staff also issued a draft plant-specific supplement to NUREG-1437, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants (GEIS) for the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant." The staff is now considering public comments received by May 20, 1999, and plans to issue a final supplemental environmental impact statement in mid-November 1999.

Regarding your belief that the Commission's regulations for license renewal lack specificity, Part 54, "Requirements for Renewal of Operating Licenses for Nuclear Power Plants," of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR Part 54) sets forth the requirements applicants for license renewal must meet and the standards by which the NRC evaluates their applications. Part 54 defines what types of plant structures and equipment fall within the scope of license renewal. The regulations next set forth the criteria for determining which structures and components within the scope of license renewal require aging management. The applicant must demonstrate that it will manage the aging of these structures and components so that they will continue to function as intended for the license renewal period.

In reviewing the applications, the NRC staff follows Part 54 and the guidance provided in a draft standard review plan (SRP), "Standard Review Plan for the Review of License Renewal Applications for Nuclear Power Plants," and a draft environmental standard review plan, NUREG-1555, "Environmental Standard Review Plan," both of which provide sufficiently clear, specific, and measurable review criteria. The license renewal SRP is available to the public on

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the NRC's web site (<http://www.nrc.gov>), and both SRPs can be obtained from the NRC Public Document Room (2120 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20555) and the local public document rooms located near each plant site. The staff is confident that the standards set forth in Part 54 and the SRPs, and which the staff applies in its review, are specific and objective.

Regarding your concern about the length of time (30 days) set aside for public comments, this period, specified in the Federal Register notice that provided the opportunity for a hearing regarding the renewal of the Calvert Cliffs operating licenses, was not a public comment period. Rather, it is a time limit generally provided in connection with licensing actions, within which an interested member of the public may request a formal hearing pursuant to 10 CFR Section 2.714 of the Commission's regulations. After this period, the regulations afford a petitioner an additional period in which to identify the technical issues he or she wishes to litigate. The Commission's objectives are to provide a fair hearing process, to avoid unnecessary delays in the NRC's review and hearing processes, and to produce a complete record that supports agency decision making on matters related to the NRC's responsibilities for protecting public health and safety. We believe the current process achieves these goals.

There is also a formal process for providing input into the staff's environmental review of a license renewal application. The Commission's regulations in 10 CFR Part 51 allow for an opportunity to provide comments on the scope of the environmental review, and in 10 CFR Section 51.73, require a minimum 45-day period for an opportunity to comment on the staff's preliminary environmental conclusions, set forth in the plant-specific supplement to the GEIS. Sixty and seventy-five day periods were provided, respectively, for these purposes with respect to Calvert Cliffs.

Finally, there are opportunities to raise questions on individual license renewal applications at public meetings, which are held in the NRC offices in Rockville, Maryland and in the vicinity of the facility applying for license renewal. Information provided by the license renewal applicants, as well as NRC evaluations, findings, and recommendations, are made available to the public in such meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss questions which arise during the staff's review of the application and an applicant's responses to these questions. And, of course, members of the public are free to correspond with the staff in writing.

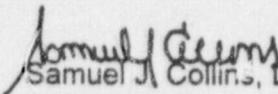
Because the license renewal process is new, the staff expects to make improvements in the effectiveness and efficiency of reviews and will take your request as encouragement to look for

Mr. William C. Batton

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additional ways to provide for even greater public involvement. I trust the information set forth above addresses your concerns. I appreciate your comments, and you may rest assured that the Commission will continue to seek improvements in its license renewal review process.

Sincerely,


Samuel J. Collins, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

July 22, 1999

The Honorable Norman R. Stone, Jr.
Maryland Senate
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

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Sincerely,

William D. Travers
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Executive Director
for Operations

Enclosure: As stated
Distribution: See next page

* See previous concurrence

A:\Letter to Sen Stone.wpd

OFFICE	Tech Ed	RLSB	RLSB	OGC
NAME	BCalure	JWAndersen*	DLSolorio*	LJChandler*
DATE	7/14/99*	7/15/99	7/15/99	7/19/99
RLSB:BC	DRIP:D	ADIP	MRR:D	EDO
CIGrimes*	DBMatthews*	WFKane*	SJCollins	WDTavers
7/16/99	7/19/99	7/19/99	7/20/99	7/21/99

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Kane

Sheron

Matthews

Grimes

Solorio

NRR Mailroom

Manahan

EDO File

The Honorable Norman R. Stone, Jr.
The Senate of Maryland
Annapolis Office
Presidential Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401-1071

Dear Senator Stone:

I am responding to your letter to Chairman Jackson of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) of June 30, 1999, in which you refer to a letter from the New 7th Democratic Civic Club, Inc. In its letter the club expresses support of the renewal application of Baltimore Gas and Electric Company for the Calvert Cliffs plants and concern about the lack of specificity related to the regulatory specifications for license renewal and the length of time set aside for public comment.

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DATE	7/14/99*	7/15/99	7/15/99	7/ /99
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CIGrimes*	DBMatthews	WFKane	SJCollins	WDTravers
7/16/99	7/16/99	7/16/99	7/ /99	7/ /99

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The Honorable Norman R. Stone, Jr.
 The Senate of Maryland
 Annapolis Office
 Presidential Wing
 Annapolis, MD 21401-1001

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CIGrimes*	DBMatthews	WFKane	SJCollins	WDTravers
7/16/99	7/ /99	7/ /99	7/ /99	7/ /99

subject to changes noted

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ACTION

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

FROM: Norman R. Stone, Jr.
Senate of Maryland

DUE: 07/22/99

EDO CONTROL: G19990341
DOC DT: 06/30/99
FINAL REPLY:

TO: Chairman

FOR SIGNATURE OF : ** GRN **

EDO

CRC NO: 99-0617

DESC: LICENSE RENEWAL OF THE NUCLEAR REACTOR LICENSES
FOR BGE'S CALVERT CLIFFS POWER PLANT

ROUTING: Travers
Knapp
Miraglia
Norry
Blaha
Burns
Miller, RI

DATE: 07/08/99

ASSIGNED TO: NRR

CONTACT: Collins

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Ref: G19990335

NRK Action: DRIP: Matthews
NRK Received: July 8, 1999
NRK Routing: Collins / Giammarco
Kane
Sherron
NRK Mainhorn

ACTION

DUE TO NRR DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

BY 7/19/99