

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS  
UNITED STATES ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20545

April 14, 1972

Honorable John O. Pastore  
Chairman  
Joint Committee on Atomic Energy  
Congress of the United States  
Washington, D. C. 20510

RE: AEC PROPOSED "DISCRETIONARY ACRS REVIEW" LEGISLATION  
H. R. 9285 AND S. 2151 (IDENTICAL BILLS)

Dear Senator Pastore:

The position of the ACRS regarding this proposed change in Subsection 182b of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, has previously been given to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy in the testimony by Dr. Spencer H. Bush, then Chairman, and Dr. Joseph M. Hendrie, past Chairman, at the hearings before the Subcommittee on Legislation on June 22, 1971 (pp. 117-118, 120, and 124).

The ACRS continues to support this proposed legislation which provides, "That, unless the Commission specifically requests a review and report on an application or portion thereof, the Committee may dispense with such review and report by notifying the Commission in writing that review by the Committee is not warranted."

The ACRS believes that making aspects of its work nonmandatory would, in the long run, be beneficial. The effect on the operations of the ACRS, and on its workload, during the next year or two would probably be small. Because change will come gradually, the ACRS believes that early enactment of the proposed legislation would provide the lead time for gradual

transition and would prepare for the time when a substantial increase in the number of cases and standardization of reactor design would justify the ACRS waiving its review in an appreciable number of cases.

The ACRS believes that it should have the authority to make a review when it considers that a review is appropriate, as provided in the proposed legislation. This provision would preclude any appearance of lessening the independence of the ACRS in its role of protecting the public health and safety. We believe that the present wording of the proposed revision will permit the ACRS to change its procedures in an orderly and gradual fashion and will lead eventually to new procedures that are entirely consistent with its role as envisaged in the original legislation establishing the ACRS.

Sincerely yours,

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C. P. Siess  
Chairman