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Congress of the United States

DOCKET NUMBER
PROPOSED RULE **PR 20**
(64FR35090)

October 27, 1999

and the Workforce
Committee on the Budget
Social Security Task Force
Committee on Resources

Member
Congressional Arts Caucus
Congressional Working Group on Children
Congressional Fire Services Caucus
Sustainable Development Caucus
Caucus Crime and Drugs Task Force

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William Kane
Director, Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Mr. Kane:

I am forwarding a letter to you that I received from a constituent, Ms. Joyce Heckman, regarding proposals to recycle radioactive scrap metal.

As Ms. Heckman's letter notes, the NRC's proposal raises a number of alarming questions. As you know, groups ranging from consumer advocates to steel manufacturers have expressed opposition to the plan, arguing that it could endanger public health and create regulatory and liability problems for manufacturers. As a scientist and a consumer, I feel these arguments need to be considered carefully before any final decision is made.

I understand that the NRC is seeking public comment on this issue. I hope that you will include Ms. Heckman's letter in your records and take her views into account.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me I can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

RUSH HOLT
Member of Congress

RH/zp
Encl.

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Joyce Goletz Heckman
19 Forman Avenue
Monroe Township, NJ 08831

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October 5, 1999

DOCKET NUMBER
PROPOSED RULE **PR 20**
(64FR35090)

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Honorable Rep. Rush Holt
1630 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-1901

OFFICE
FOR
ADMINISTRATION

OCT 12 1999

Dear Rep. Holt,

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The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported on September 19, 1999 that "tons of slightly radioactive scrap metal is piling up for disposal at nuclear reactors and laboratories across California and around the nation."

What is troubling about this problem is what the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing as a solution. The agency is considering allowing these scrap metals to be recycled into common household items, for example, baby carriages, frying pans, spoons and zippers.

Recycling metals is an admirable goal, however, it is not a safe solution to this problem. Exposing humans to low levels of radiation through the cooking utensils their food is prepared in, clothes they wear and baby carriages their children ride in is not sound public policy.

The US public has been down this road before. In the 1960s, the Honorable Senator Kerr from Oklahoma pushed for the passage of legislation to exempt highly toxic and radioactive sands from federal and state regulation. The legislation passed, and industry began selling radioactive sand. The material was used for sand in childrens' sandboxes, and made into concrete and plaster. Meanwhile, thousands of homes, schools and public buildings constructed with those sands were subsequently torn down or abandoned. They were condemned because the levels of radon gas inside was higher than that found in uranium mines which killed 70% of the miners.

Thus, I urge you to promote legislation that prohibits the recycling of scrap metals emanating from the nuclear industry.

Yours truly,

Joyce Goletz Heckman