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# United States Senate

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE YEAR 2000  
TECHNOLOGY PROBLEM

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6486

November 1, 1999

Chairman Greta Joy Dicus  
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555

Honorable Greta Joy Dicus:

We are encouraged by the numerous statements from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that all safety systems at Nuclear Power Plants are Y2K ready. The Committee continues to believe that the electrical grid will be stable and that disruptions from Y2K will be minimal. We are concerned, however, about the lack of public confidence in the nuclear industry's efforts and specific post December 31, 1999 operating regimes.

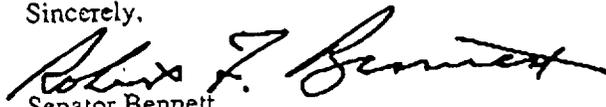
Recent testimony by GAO indicates that they share our concerns regarding the use of existing contingency plans in the Y2K risk environment. Moreover, although we believe that the on-site inspections by NRC confirmed that NPPs are complying with "acceptable industry Y2K-readiness standards", there are some lingering questions about whether sufficient independent validation has occurred.

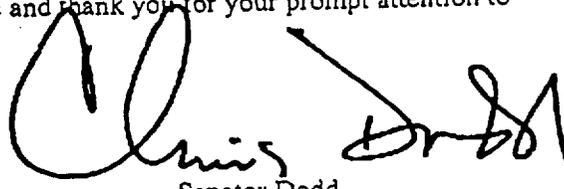
Please provide the following information by November 15, 1999:

1. A list of nuclear power plants and how their mission-critical systems were validated as Y2K-ready, categorized according to the following: internal quality assurance, external review, and independent validation and verification. As possible, describe the equivalence and differences in such approaches;
2. Detailed information about voluntary pledges by industry representatives to maintain a 30-45 day supply of emergency diesel generator fuel, and other voluntary measures to reduce the risk of plant failure;
3. A description of the process by which NRC will make a final determination as to which NPP, if any, will be shut-down for safety concerns during the rollover period; and,
4. The minimal safety standards that will be acceptable under the proposed suspension of technical regulations.

Please contact John Stephenson or James Dailey at (202) 224-5224 if you have questions about the above requests. I look forward to your response and thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

  
Senator Bennett  
Chairman

  
Senator Dodd  
Vice-Chair

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