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Stillwater, OK 74074  
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Secretary of the Commission  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Secretary:

I am writing in support of two new rules proposed for nuclear power plants: one to establish limits on employee working hours at nuclear power plants, and the second to require training of supervisors, managers, and directors of plants on regulations protecting employees from harassment and intimidation when they voice safety concerns.

Unsafe operation of nuclear power plants can lead to accidents with loss of life, human health risks, and serious environmental damage. The proposed rules will significantly improve the safety at plants by ensuring that workers are not suffering from fatigue, which would impair their ability to make safe and correct decisions, and are not subject to intimidation when they speak out about safety. The Federal government has set limits on working hours for truck drivers and airline pilots, since their impairment by fatigue could lead to accidents with grave danger to the public. Nuclear power plant workers also control potentially dangerous equipment and should be subject to similar regulations. These limits on hours of work must apply whether the plant is in operation or is shut down, because safety is also important in the performance of maintenance work done during periods when the plant is shut down. Currently supervisors, managers, and directors of plants can use the excuse of ignorance of the law if they harass employees who speak out. This excuse is generally not accepted in any other legal proceeding and creates a climate in which workers may reasonably be afraid of reprisal for speaking out. The second rule eliminates the use of this excuse by ensuring that these people are not ignorant of the law. For these reasons, I urge you to enact the new rules.

Sincerely,



Margaret A. Eastman