

Friday, August 19, 2005

Andrew L. Bates, Acting Secretary  
Office of the Secretary  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Dear Acting Secretary Bates,

We respectfully request that NRC grant an additional 60 days to the concerned citizens of Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois, and the organizations, which represent them, in which to file scoping comments on NRC's Environmental Review of the Palisades nuclear power plant 20-year license extension proposal.

We, the undersigned representatives of public interest and environmental organizations in Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois, on behalf of our members wish to comment during the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) "Environmental Review" scoping proceeding for the proposed 20 year license extension at the Palisades nuclear power plant in Covert, Michigan. We have diligently been working with our respective memberships to prepare meaningful public comments to the NRC. In fact, a number of our organizations took part in the July 28<sup>th</sup> NRC public meeting at Lake Michigan College in South Haven, Michigan and orally submitted official public comments at that time. One comment made by members of the public and environmental groups present at that meeting was a request for an extension to NRC's short public comment period, which began on June 13<sup>th</sup>, and ends on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The NRC, however, has apparently declined that request and granted no such extension.

NRC's "Environmental Report" upon which the NRC is requesting public comment is a thick, technical document. NRC has done little -- besides a single Federal Register notice -- to announce the 20 year license extension proposal, any of the related decision making proceedings, or ways in which the concerned public can take part. Our organizations have been left to scramble to get the word out and meet NRC's short deadlines. A number of organizations, however, representing dozens of concerned individuals who decided to officially intervene against the license extension, successfully filed a request for an official NRC licensing hearing by the August 8<sup>th</sup> deadline. By meeting that deadline, we are now left scrambling trying to meet NRC's August 22<sup>nd</sup> environmental review scoping proceeding public comment deadline. In addition, confusion was created by NRC's failure to notify Lake Michigan College that a previously scheduled meeting on August 5<sup>th</sup> had been canceled. A number of concerned citizens and our organizations spent hours on the phone -- and even driving to Lake Michigan College -- in an effort to confirm and not miss that meeting, only to find out in the end that it had been canceled by NRC. Even Lake Michigan College's scheduler fully expected the meeting to take place. Those wasted hours could have been better spent preparing public comments for yet another rushed NRC deadline on August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Our grassroots members with whom we must confer in the preparation of quality public comments are scattered geographically around Lake Michigan, many busy with jobs, family gatherings, vacations and other time commitments at this time of year which has prevented us as organizations from assembling comments by NRC's short deadline. Palisades' current license does not expire until 2011, making it difficult to understand why the NRC is setting such short deadlines for public participation in this decision making process which involves such significant adverse potential impacts upon the environment and public health, safety and security in Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois.

In addition, we respectfully request that the NRC conduct additional public meetings elsewhere in the 50 mile zone surrounding the Palisades nuclear power plant. Thus far, a single public meeting was held at Lake Michigan College in South Haven. To our knowledge, the only notification for that meeting — other than the hurried spreading of the word by our own organizations to let concerned citizens know about the Federal Register notice -- consisted of a single small ad in the local South Haven newspaper placed by the NRC. We therefore request that the NRC conduct public meetings in such locations as Kalamazoo/Portage, Holland, Grand Rapids, Niles, Benton Harbor/St. Joe, Three Rivers, and even such Indiana communities as South Bend, Mishawaka, and Elkhart — all of which are shown by NRC's own Environmental Report map (Figure 1, Palisades 50-Mile Region, page D-26) to fall within 50 miles of the Palisades nuclear reactor.

Thank you for your attention to this matter of utmost importance to the environment and health, safety, security, and common defense of the residents of Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois and please grant an additional 60 days in which to file scoping comments on NRC's Environmental Review of the Palisades nuclear power plant 20-year license extension proposal.

Sincerely,

Grant Smith, Citizens Action Coalition of Indiana, Indianapolis, Indiana

Cyndi Roper, Clean Water Action, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Michael Keegan, Coalition for a Nuclear-Free Great Lakes, Monroe, Michigan

Alice Hirt, Don't Waste Michigan, Holland, Michigan

James Clift, Michigan Environmental Council (MEC), Lansing, Michigan

Chuck Jordan, Green Party of Van Buren County, Bangor, Michigan

Maynard Kaufman, Michigan Land Trustees, Bangor, Michigan

David Kraft, Nuclear Energy Information Service (NEIS), Evanston, Illinois

Keith Gunter, Nuclear-Free Great Lakes Campaign, Livonia, Michigan

Kevin Kamps, Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS), Washington, D.C.

Mike Shriberg, Public Interest Research Group in Michigan (PIRGIM), Ann Arbor, Michigan

Thomas Leonard, West Michigan Environmental Action Council, Grand Rapids, Michigan

cc:

Robert Schaff, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Project Manager for Environmental Review of Palisades 20 year license extension

Katheryn Winsberg, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Office of General Counsel

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow

U.S. Senator Carl Levin

U.S. Senator Evan Bayh

U.S. Senator Richard Lugar

U.S. Senator Richard Durbin

U.S. Senator Barak Obama

U.S. Representative Fred Upton

U.S. Representative Vernon Ehlers

U.S. Representative Joe Schwarz

U.S. Representative Peter Hoekstra

U.S. Representative Chris Chocola

U.S. Representative Mark Souder

U.S. Representative Peter Visclosky

U.S. Representative Bobby Rush

U.S. Representative Jesse Jackson, Jr.

U.S. Representative Daniel Lipinski

U.S. Representative Luis Gutierrez

U.S. Representative Rahm Emanuel

U.S. Representative Danny Davis

U.S. Representative Janice Schakowsky

U.S. Representative Mark Kirk

U.S. Representative Melissa Bean

Governor of the State of Michigan Jennifer Granholm

Governor of the State of Indiana Mitch Daniels

Governor of the State of Illinois Rod Blagojevich

Attorney General of the State of Michigan Mike Cox

Attorney General of the State of Indiana Steve Carter

Attorney General of the State of Illinois Lisa Madigan