

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 1, 2014

The Honorable Allison M. Macfarlane
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Chairman Macfarlane,

We write to express serious concern over a media report¹ that the United States is working with Russia to block a European proposal to upgrade safety standards for nuclear power plants. Moreover, we demand that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) cease any involvement in attempts designed to block efforts to increase nuclear safety. Instead, we urge you to accelerate the implementation of all twelve recommendations made by the NRC's Near-Term Task Force.

The meltdowns of the Fukushima nuclear reactors that were caused by the March, 2011 earthquake and tsunami reminded us of the devastating effects of a core meltdown. Radiation from the accident was detected over a thousand miles away², land contamination continues to keep tens of thousands of people from returning to their homes³, and cleanup costs estimates continue to rise, with industry admitting it will cost over \$100 billion.⁴ In addition, reports indicate a possible increase in thyroid cancers among children near Fukushima, with 104 cases diagnosed as of this past August.⁵

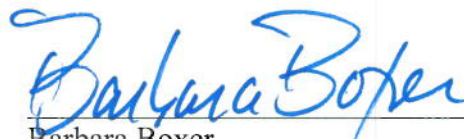
Recently, you stated that you have achieved your key objective of "ensuring that the agency implemented lessons learned from the tragic accident at Fukushima Daiichi, so that the American people can be confident that such an accident will never take place here." However, NRC has still not required the complete implementation of a single one of the post-Fukushima recommendations for improving the safety of nuclear power plants in the U.S.

The Fukushima disaster was a stunning reminder of the importance of strong regulatory oversight of the nuclear energy industry. The NRC should be working *with* our international partners, not against them, to ensure the highest standards of safety are in place both here and around the world. We urge you to redouble your efforts to accelerate the implementation of such standards in the United States, and cease efforts to impede them.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

¹ <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-10-23/u-s-said-to-join-russia-in-blocking-nuclear-safety-moves.html>

² <http://ajw.asahi.com/article/0311disaster/fukushima/AJ201111260001>

³ <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2014/03/10/editorials/rebuilding-shattered-lives/#.U434iaPD-Uk>

⁴ <http://rt.com/business/tepco-fukushima-costs-double-158/>

⁵ <http://ajw.asahi.com/article/0311disaster/fukushima/AJ201408240011>