

CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
CONNECTICUT

COMMITTEES:

BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

FOREIGN RELATIONS

HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0702

March 22, 2000

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
448 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
(202) 224-2823
TDD (202) 224-5464

STATE OFFICE:
100 GREAT MEADOW ROAD
WETHERSFIELD, CT 06109
(860) 258-6940
TDD (860) 529-7498

HOME PAGE: <http://dodd.senate.gov>

To: Mr. Dennis K. Rathbun
Director
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Congressional Affairs
Washington, D.C 20555

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

OFFICE
ADMINISTRATIVE

00 MAR 30 A 7:03

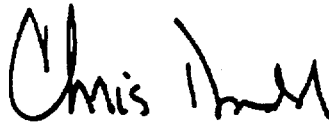
From: Ms. Hildegard Hannum
Post Office Box 190
Old Lyme, Connecticut 06371

Dear Mr. Rathbun:

Because of my desire to be responsive to my constituent's comments and concerns, your response to the enclosed correspondence from Ms. Hannum is requested. Please respond directly to Ms. Hannum, with a copy to this office, attention Terrance Moore.

Your comments and views will be appreciated.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
United States Senator

CJD:tm
Enclosure

3/28....To EDO for Direct Reply...Suspense: 4/12...Cpy to: SECY/RAS, OCA to Ack..00-0217

Hildegarde Hannum
P. O. Box 190
Old Lyme, CT 06371

March 17, 2000

Dear Senator Dodd:

My first reaction when I read that low-level radioactive waste is being recycled into consumer products was one of disbelief. But I kept finding references to it, so I made a point of informing myself through extensive reading. And now that I know it is true, my present reaction is one of outrage and horror.

It's bad enough that business interests are pushing for permission to increase radioactive recycling because of the profit involved—regardless of the danger to public health. Even worse is that my government, which already issues licenses to reprocess radioactive metal, is also eager to move forward with and broaden this program because it's a way of disposing of the staggering amount of radioactive material that has accumulated at nuclear weapons facilities and nuclear power stations because there is no safe way of getting rid of it.

The justification given for pursuing this method of disposal is the claim that low-level radioactivity is not harmful—after all, we are exposed to natural background radiation every day. But reputable scientists insist there is no safe level. And this is all the more reason why we should not tolerate exposure to the man-made variety in addition to what already exists in nature.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission wants to set a federal standard for an "acceptable" level of radioactivity that can be used in a product. Even if there were an acceptable level, the products will not be labeled as having radioactive content. Consumers may be exposed to a dozen different products at one time or to hundreds of products over time. So much for the acceptable-level argument. As with genetically engineered food, we will not know when, and to what extent, we are being exposed.

It goes beyond the grasp of reason that such every-day products as cutlery, pots and pans, toys, baby carriages, swing sets, belt buckles, zippers, furniture, eye glasses, teeth braces, building materials, batteries, automobiles, and computers should have radioactivity added to them. But this is what is in store for us if the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and radioactive metal decommissioning facilities have their way. A standard will be set that allows an increase in the recycling of radioactive scrap.

Where do you stand? What are you doing to stop this dreadful scheme dead in its tracks? Not only to stop the program from expanding but to stop it altogether.

Sincerely,
Hildegarde Hannum