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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3506

February 17, 2000

The Honorable Richard A. Meserve
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to request a meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) response to the recent downgrading of the United States Enrichment Corporation's (USEC) credit rating. I represent southern Ohio which is home to one of USEC's Gaseous Diffusion Plants (GDP) and I am very concerned that the current credit rating for USEC's long-term corporate credit stands below an investment grade rating. The USEC Privatization Act of 1996, P.L. 104-134, specifically authorizes the NRC to review the issuance of a license or certificate of compliance when it "would be inimical to--the common defense and security of the United States; or the maintenance of a reliable and economical domestic source of enrichment services." It is my understanding that the NRC already has begun its planning for such a review and I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to be briefed by you and your staff.

As I am sure you are aware, on February 3, 2000, USEC announced it would layoff 850 workers this summer - 425 employees at the GDP in Piketon, Ohio and 425 employees at the Paducah, Kentucky facility. Unfortunately, these workforce reductions follow 500 layoffs experienced at the plants since the company was privatized in July 1998. The credit downgrading and the significant number of layoffs raise some troubling questions about the government's responsibility to the local communities, our workers' safety, the reliability of our nation's nuclear fuel supply, and the stability of vital national security initiatives. With so many critical issues on the table, we should work together to ensure our nation's nuclear energy enterprise remains viable.

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2/18...To EDO to Prepare Response for Chairman's Signature...Date due: March 6...
Copy to: Chairman, Comrs, OGC, RF...OCA to Ack...00-0119...Commission Correspondence

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I appreciate your attention to this urgent matter. My staff has contacted your staff to schedule a briefing and I look forward to working with you to address these difficult issues. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me in Ohio at 740-353-5171 or Michelle Dallafior of my staff at 202-225-5705.

Sincerely



Ted Strickland
Member of Congress