



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I
475 ALLENDALE ROAD
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406-1415

February 23, 2012

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen:

Thank you for forwarding the letter you received from Mr. Howard Shaffer dated January 6, 2012, regarding the NRC Vermont Yankee Annual Assessment meeting held on June 22, 2011. My staff has spoken and corresponded with Mr. Shaffer in the past and we are appreciative of his comments and thoughts on the conduct of our public meetings.

As you are aware, the NRC conducts many public forums including annual assessment meetings, structured to give all members of the public a chance to ask questions of the NRC as well as express their views and concerns. While the level of public interest varies widely by state and nuclear facility, many of the individuals who participate in public meetings at Vermont Yankee are very passionate and vocal, which sometimes creates challenges in effectively managing the meetings.

It is our goal to conduct these meetings in a facilitated, secure atmosphere that provides all in attendance an equal opportunity to speak. We acknowledge that our facilitators, on occasion, have needed to curtail verbal outbursts from the audience. However, we do have procedures and plans in place with local law enforcement should any audience member cross the line from passionate expression to aggressive or overly disruptive behavior. To date, I believe my staff has been successful in maintaining a civil environment for ensuring the audience is treated fairly and indiscriminately.

We regret that Mr. Shaffer was not able to speak at the last Vermont Yankee public meeting. Although we tried our best to accommodate everyone, due to the number of people in attendance, we simply could not get to him and several others in the allotted time period. Due to the level of participation at these meetings, it can be a challenge to hold audience comments within the allotted time period. We certainly will take Mr. Shaffer's feedback and examine how we might improve on that aspect of our meetings.

J. Shaheen

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If you have additional questions in this matter, please contact Mr. Eugene Dacus in our Office of Congressional Affairs at 301-415-1697.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William M. Dean
Regional Administrator

J. Shaheen

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If you have additional questions in this matter, please contact Mr. Eugene Dacus in our Office of Congressional Affairs at 301-415-1697.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William M. Dean
Regional Administrator

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