



October 4, 2013

Allison Macfarlane, Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555
By e-mail to: CHAIRMAN.Resources@nrc.gov

SUBJECT: *Government Shutdown and Waste Confidence Meetings*

Dear Dr. Macfarlane:

On behalf of 26 environmental organizations across the United States¹, we are writing to thank you for the commitment you made in today's NRC press release (No. 13-083) to reschedule two of the NRC's 12 meetings regarding the proposed Waste Confidence Rule and the Draft Waste Confidence Generic Environmental Impact Statement ("DGEIS"). See 78 Fed. Reg. 54,789 (Sept. 6, 2013). The NRC was forced to cancel these two meetings – scheduled for October 7 and 9 in California -- because of the government shutdown, which is expected to affect the NRC starting in the middle of next week.

As you know, the NRC's meetings regarding the proposed rule and DGEIS provide critically important opportunities for public education and input to the NRC regarding long-unresolved questions about the environmental impacts of prolonged spent fuel storage at reactor sites. Therefore, we ask that you make the same commitment to reschedule any of other waste confidence-related meetings the NRC may be forced to cancel in Ohio, Minnesota, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, and Maryland.

We also ask you to take measures to ensure that notice of meeting cancellations is not precipitous. The NRC gave extremely short notice of the cancellation of the October 7 and 9 meetings: only one business day before the first meeting and only three business days before the second meeting. While we appreciate the fact that the last-minute nature of the cancellations may have been unavoidable, they have imposed serious hardships on California organizations and members of the public that are seeking to participate in those meetings. Little time is left for cancellation of bus reservations and outreach to members of the public to tell them that the meetings will not take place. Our clients are concerned that many people may show up to the

¹ Beyond Nuclear, Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, Center for a Sustainable Coast, Citizens Allied for Safe Energy, Don't Waste Michigan, Ecology Party of Florida, Friends of the Coast, Friends of the Earth, Georgia Women's Action for New Directions, Green States Solutions, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Missouri Coalition for the Environment, NC WARN, Nevada Nuclear Waste Task Force, New England Coalition, No Nukes Pennsylvania, Nuclear Energy Information Service, Nuclear Information and Resource Service, Nuclear Watch South, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Public Citizen, Riverkeeper, SEED Coalition, San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace, Sierra Club Nuclear Free Campaign, and Southern Alliance for Clean Energy.



meetings, not having heard the news of their cancellation. They may expend limited resources to travel to the meetings, and may become discouraged or unable to attend later meetings. To avoid this unnecessary hindrance on public participation going forward, we ask you to ensure that the NRC will provide at least ten days' notice of any future cancellations.

In addition, consistent with the amount of prior notice provided in the September 6 Federal Register announcement, please provide at least 30 days' prior notice of rescheduled meetings so that organizations can do adequate outreach to the public and the press, and to allow members of the public to make advance plans to attend. Because we are approaching the holiday season, we also ask that you avoid dates close to holidays or between Christmas and New Year's in rescheduling meetings.

Finally, we seek to ensure that members of the public have an adequate opportunity to prepare written comments on the proposed rule and the DGEIS after the public meetings. The NRC's September 6 Federal Register notice scheduled the last meeting for November 14, two weeks before the commenting deadline. Consistent with that schedule, we request that you instruct the Staff to provide at least two weeks after the last rescheduled meeting to prepare comments. In making this request, we note that the effect of the government shutdown on our ability to prepare written comments is not yet clear, and that we may need to seek additional time for commenting, depending on how long the shutdown lasts.

Again, we appreciate your commitment to providing the public with a meaningful opportunity to participate in the California meetings on the proposed waste confidence rule and DGEIS. We hope you will extend that commitment to the entire process for holding meetings and taking public comment.

Thank you very much for your consideration.



Sincerely,

/s/

Diane Curran

/s/

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From: Diane Curran <dcurran@harmoncurran.com>
Sent: Friday, October 04, 2013 4:27 PM
To: CHAIRMAN Resource
Cc: CMRAPOSTOLAKIS Resource; CMRMAGWOOD Resource; CMROSTENDORFF Resource; Imboden, Andy; McConnell, Keith; Lopas, Sarah; Vietti-Cook, Annette; execsec@nrc.gov; Woollen, Mary; Docket, Hearing; magolds@emory.edu; Kristine L. Svnicki (CMRSVNICKI.Resource@nrc.gov)
Subject: Letter regarding waste confidence meetings
Attachments: Letter to NRC Chairman re Waste Confidence meetings 10-4-13.pdf

Dear Chairman Macfarlane:
Please see the attached letter, which seeks time-sensitive action.
Thanks,
Diane Curran