



American College of Nuclear Physicians/Society of Nuclear Medicine

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OFFICE

June 27, 2000

Chairman Richard Meserve
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
One White Flint North
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, Maryland
20582-2738

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Dear Chairman Meserve:

Last June, the Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) and the American College of Nuclear Physicians (ACNP) submitted a letter to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) expressing our strong interest in and support for the granting of a license for the export of highly enriched uranium (HEU) to Canada. The five-year license to export HEU was, and remains, central to the production of essential medical radioisotopes.

We were pleased with the NRC's decision last year to grant the export license and its findings that the Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) and MDS Nordion were in compliance with the Schumer Amendment provisions. By granting a five-year export license to MDS Nordion, the NRC ensures that physicians in this country have a reliable supply of radioisotopes. In addition, we support the NRC in encouraging the development of low enriched uranium (LEU) while enabling vital HEU targets to continue to provide an uninterrupted supply of molybdenum-99. This radioisotope is further processed into technetium-99m (Tc-99m) and is used in eight out of ten nuclear medicine procedures.

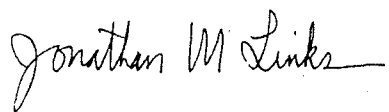
More than 80% of the approximately 12 million radiopharmaceutical medical procedures performed each year in the United States use Tc-99m. Over sixty-five percent of the Tc-99m used in North America is produced in Canada by AECL and then processed and supplied to U.S. pharmaceutical manufacturers and our members by MDS Nordion. These vital isotopes, currently produced in the NRU reactor, will be produced in the future by MDS Nordion in the MAPLE reactors and their new processing facility. The radioisotopes are used to diagnose and treat a variety of diseases in thousands of patients every day in the United States. For many Americans, especially the elderly, nuclear medicine diagnostic procedures, such as detecting the spread of cancer or determining the severity of heart disease, can be life saving.

We understand that while a meeting is not required as part of the approved export license, the NRC nevertheless plans to hold a briefing meeting on this matter on July 10th. On

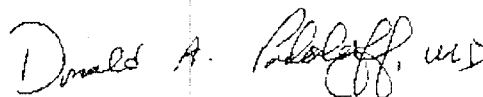
behalf of our 12,000 physicians, technologists, pharmacists and scientists members, we would be most concerned if the NRC contemplates changes to the terms of the export license. Any such changes could jeopardize the supply of radioisotopes to the United States and adversely affect patient care. Moreover, we remain concerned that the NRC's decision to hold this meeting might signal to our members and others in the health community that the United States may restrict their access to these essential radioisotopes.

Should you have any questions about our interest in this important matter, please feel free to contact Bill Uffelman, SNM's Director of Public Affairs, at 703-708-9773 or by email at wuffelman@snm.org.

Sincerely yours,



Jonathan Links, PhD
President
Society of Nuclear Medicine



Donald A. Podoloff, MD
President
American College of Nuclear Physicians