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From: "James Devine" <devine@usa.net>
To: <SECY@nrc.gov>
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Subject: RIN 3150-AH60 ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff

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February 21, 2006 (10:50am)

Secretary
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff

VIA E-mail to: SECY@nrc.gov

I am writing to express comments on the proposed rulemaking on protecting reactors from terrorist attack (RIN 3150-AH60). It is unimaginable and unconscionable that nuclear reactors remain vulnerable to terrorist attack but the proposed regulations make no substantial changes in this significant weakness in America's domestic security. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has been entirely derelict in securing the safety of our people by failing to address this obvious threat.

The Atomic Energy Act of 1954 and the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 give NRC the responsibility for ensuring that the peaceful uses of nuclear energy "make the maximum contribution to the common defense and security and the national welfare..." Under current rules, fences and guard posts are not required to limit access to an exclusion area and this area may be traversed by a highway, railroad, or waterway. There is no requirement for protection against an assault by air -- the means used to destroy the World Trade Center - and onsite physical security forces would be outnumbered by a terrorist cell with as many assailants as participated in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The proposed rule would do no more than codify existing standards. It makes one wonder whether the commission is aware that the country is at war with religious fanatics who would use any means to injure our society.

Among many other reasonable ideas, two specific changes are of absolute necessity:

1. Reactors should be required to be protected from air attack, for example by construction of "Beamhenge" shields made of steel I-beams and cables at stand-off distances to protect critical reactor structures.

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2. Reactors should be required to be protected from ground attacks involving at least as many assailants (19) as participated in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

There are probably many other initiatives that should be required, but these two requirements are common sense.

The nuclear industry's contributions to members of Congress have resulted in egregious corporate influence on lawmakers. The nuclear power industry has given \$8.7 million to federal candidates and committees in the 2002 election cycle and much more since then. By effectively buying the votes of public officials, the nuclear industry is ensuring the passage of nuke-friendly legislation that will cost taxpayers billions of dollars. Congress reauthorized the Price-Anderson Act, which absolves nuclear power companies of liability above \$9 billion in case of an accident.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission must rise above these political influences and consider the safety of American citizens. There is too much potential for loss of life and injury if these facilities are not safeguarded. The entire economy could go up in smoke with one catastrophic event at a nuclear facility. There are people who would like to cause such a disaster and they are highly motivated. You simply cannot leave our nation vulnerable, no matter what the cost and regardless of the economic or political ramifications of your action.

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