

May 5, 2006

The Honorable Bill Richardson
Governor of New Mexico
Sante Fe, New Mexico 87300

Dear Governor Richardson:

In 1976, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) adopted a recommendation from several State organizations, including the National Governors Association, that the NRC request each State to appoint a single person to act as a liaison to the NRC for the purpose of improving Federal/State cooperation. The NRC looks to the Governor-appointed State Liaison Officer to provide the primary communication channel between the States and the NRC. It is anticipated the State Liaison Officer would serve as the key person in the State to keep the Governor informed on issues under the jurisdiction of NRC (specifically matters addressing nuclear regulation, nuclear security, and radiological public health and safety), and to provide NRC with State information on particular nuclear safety, security, or environmental issues.

I am writing to request that you appoint a State Liaison Officer to act as the primary liaison to the NRC. It is my understanding that the most recent State Liaison Officer, Derrith Watchman-Moore, Deputy Secretary, New Mexico Environment Department, has resigned. The NRC will continue to work with Cindy Padilla, Acting Deputy Secretary, New Mexico Environment Department, and, until you choose a new State Liaison Officer, the NRC will keep you informed of NRC programs and activities through Ms. Padilla. At the same time, the NRC will continue to work with various individuals in State agencies with whom the NRC has established relationships on specific issues.

The Commission looks forward to the continued participation by the State of New Mexico in the NRC's State Liaison Officer program. If you or your staff have any questions or wish to obtain additional information, please contact me; Janet R. Schlueter, Director of NRC's Office of State and Tribal Programs in NRC headquarters at 301-415-3340; or William Maier, our NRC Region IV State Liaison Officer, at 817-860-8267.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nils J. Diaz

cc: Cindy Padilla