

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

FROM: DUE: 06/18/03

EDO CONTROL: G20030288

DOC DT: 05/29/03

FINAL REPLY:

Senator Debbie Stabenow

TO:

Gerke, OCA

FOR SIGNATURE OF :

\*\* GRN \*\*

CRC NO: 03-0348

Travers, EDO

DESC:

Infant Morality and Big Rock (Ellis Boal and Virginia Heick)

ROUTING:

Travers  
Paperiello  
Kane  
Norry  
Dean  
Thadani, RES  
Dyer, RIII

DATE: 06/02/03

ASSIGNED TO:

CONTACT:

NRR

Collins

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Coordinate response with RES. Prepare response from Travers to Senator Stabenow.

Information in this record was deleted in  
accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.  
Exemptions 6  
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E-RIDS: SECY-01

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

Date Printed: May 30, 2003 11:28

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PAPER NUMBER: LTR-03-0348                      LOGGING DATE: 05/29/2003  
ACTION OFFICE: EDO

AUTHOR: Debbie Stabenow  
AFFILIATION: SEN  
ADDRESSEE: Laura Gerke  
SUBJECT: Infant mortality and Big Rock

ACTION: Signature of EDO  
DISTRIBUTION: OCA to Ack

LETTER DATE: 05/29/2003

ACKNOWLEDGED No  
SPECIAL HANDLING:

NOTES: Rec'd in OCA/SECY---May 29

FILE LOCATION: Adams

DATE DUE: 06/20/2003                      DATE SIGNED:

EDO --G20030288

**FAX****DEBBIE STABENOW**  
United States Senator  
MICHIGAN**To:** Laura Gerke**From:** Brandon Fewins**Fax:** 301-415-8571**Pages:** (including cover)**Phone:****Date:** 5/29/03**Re:** Big Rock Power Plant**CC:**☐ **Urgent**☐ **For Review**☐ **Please Comment**☐ **Please Reply****• Comments**

Laura:

I am faxing this letter per our conversation from a couple of weeks ago. Sorry it took so long to get to you. If you have any questions please give me a call.

MAR 25 2003

Ellis Boal

(b)(6)

Virginia Heick

(b)(6)

February 16, 2003

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
US Senate 702 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Infant Mortality and Big Rock

Dear Senator Stabinow:

We are writing as co-chairs of the Up North Green Party of northwest lower Michigan. Our party represents individuals who live near the Big Rock Point nuclear power plant in Charlevoix, Michigan, which ceased power generation operations in 1997.

We are very concerned about the findings in a peer-reviewed scientific journal article (enclosed) suggesting that ionizing radiation emitted during operation of Big Rock Point nuclear power plant during the years 1962-1997 was associated with increased overall infant death rates, infant death rates due to congenital anomalies, and possibly childhood cancer rates (Mangano JJ, Gould JM, Sternglass EJ, Sherman JD, Brown J, McDonnell W. Infant death and childhood cancer reductions after nuclear plant closings in the United States. Archives of Environmental Health (Jan-Feb 2002, vol 57 pages 23-31).

The researchers compared infant mortality and childhood cancer rates in downwind communities near eight nuclear power plants across the country (including Big Rock Point) before and after the plants closed. They found that infant mortality and early childhood cancer incidence rates declined with statistical significance (meaning the declines were unlikely to be due to chance) after the plants closed. This suggests that the rates were elevated during plant operation due to increased releases of radionuclides.

We are very concerned that infants born or raised near the Big Rock Point plant may have been adversely, even lethally, affected by the plant's release of ionizing radiation. We are asking you to conduct additional scientific studies to further examine these findings.

Several types of study come to mind. For example, an epidemiologic study could be conducted in which interviews with parents of affected children (cases) and parents of healthy

children (controls) are conducted to assess other risk factors for infant mortality and cancer. Another possibility is a confirmation of the findings of Mangano et al. combined with actual figures on downwind releases of ionizing radiation or contamination of locally produced and consumed milk or locally grown and consumed crops in order to better characterize in utero and childhood exposures. Other studies could focus on health effects among children living downwind of currently operating nuclear power plants, including in vivo dose reconstructions taking both inhalation and ingestion into account as routes of exposure.

Because of small population sizes, it is necessary, as Mangano and colleagues did, to combine information from numerous locations, possibly even internationally among nations with similar rates for these events. All studies conducted should include local community members as well as scientific experts on study advisory committees.

One of the pillars of the Green Party is ecological wisdom, meaning living in harmony with our surroundings and seeking to minimize our negative impact and maximize our positive impact on the human and natural environment. Another pillar is grassroots democracy, including the right to self-determination and an accountable government. Another is social justice.

In line with these principles, we believe these findings are of urgent importance not only to the communities of the plants where operation has ceased, but also to communities where operations continue. It is vitally important that power generation not come at the expense of the lives and health of infants and children.

An aspect of individuals' self-determination is to be accurately informed of risks. Individuals have a right to make decisions about their health and to weigh costs and benefits, but to do so, they must have all the facts. To be accountable to the people and to give citizens the facts needed to make rational decisions, we urge you to fund one or more comprehensive, scientifically sound studies to conclusively determine whether and how nuclear power generation in the United States causes infant mortality, congenital anomalies, and childhood cancer.

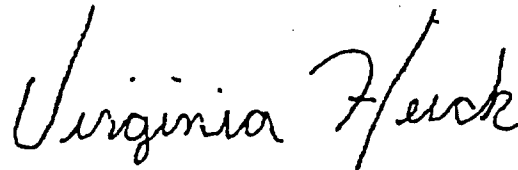
Please contact either of us at the addresses below to keep us informed on steps taken to assess this threat to our childrens' health. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



Ellis Boal

Enclosure



Virginia Heck