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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

May 10, 2016

The Honorable Stephen Burns
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
11545 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Chairman Burns,

I write to follow up on the extremely serious problem of degraded baffle-former bolts at Indian Point Unit 2. It is deeply troubling that 227 baffle-former bolts were found to be degraded inside Indian Point Unit 2's reactor core. While failed baffle-former bolts have been an issue in other nuclear reactors, it is my understanding that this instance is the largest number of failed baffle bolts of any nuclear facility in the United States. The cause of the failed bolts is unknown and the effect on both the threading of the bolt holes as well as the plates themselves is unknown.

Given the large number of failed bolts at Indian Point Unit 2, we request that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) utilize its regulatory authority to prevent the reactor from restarting until the root cause analysis is complete. A root cause analysis will also ensure that structural or systemic failures can be identified and, if necessary, lessons learned can be applied more broadly across the nuclear reactor fleet to ensure that the risk of this situation occurring elsewhere is minimized to the greatest extent possible. To allow the reactor to go back online without knowing the full cause and effects of the degraded bolts would be a severe safety risk.

Therefore, I request that the NRC ensure that there is no risk that additional bolts will fail or that any other part of the reactor's infrastructure is damaged or at risk before allowing it to be restarted.

I am also concerned about the lack of urgency to inspect Unit 3 for similar degradation. It is my understanding that NRC staff does not recommend inspecting Unit 3's baffle bolts until the previously scheduled 2017 refueling outage. This is completely unacceptable, and should be reconsidered by the NRC.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this request. Should you or your staff wish to discuss these concerns in greater details, please do not hesitate to contact Brooke Jamison, of my staff, at 202-224-6924.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

McCloskey, Bridin

From: Hoyos, Andres (Gillibrand) [mailto:Andres_Hoyos@gillibrand.senate.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2016 4:56 PM

To: Weil, Jenny <Jenny.Weil@nrc.gov>

Subject: [External_Sender] Letter to NRC re: Indian Point Baffle Bolts

Hi Jenny,

This letter was sent today can you please pass it along to the appropriate folks.

Best,
Andres