

PAUL D. WELLSTONE
MINNESOTA

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2303

COMMITTEES
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES
SMALL BUSINESS
INDIAN AFFAIRS

February 23, 1994

Mr. Dennis K. Rathbun, Director
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Congressional Affairs
Washington, DC 20594

Dear Mr. Rathbun:

I have been contacted by a constituent of mine, Mr. Christopher Taylor, about a question he has regarding evacuation plans at Northern States Power's Prairie Island Nuclear Facility in Red Wing, Minnesota. I have enclosed a copy of his letter for your review.

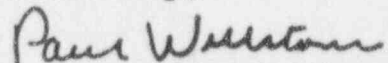
Mr. Taylor has requested my assistance in ascertaining whether any federal laws are out of compliance in the event that a flood closes the only bridge connecting Prairie Island to the rivershore. Mr. Taylor wonders whether the closing of this bridge would violate laws relating to emergency evacuation plans.

I would appreciate it if you would review this matter and advise me of your findings. Please direct your response to Scott Adams, a member of my staff, at:

2550 University Avenue W., #100N
St. Paul, MN 55114
612/645-0323

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Paul David Wellstone
United States Senator

PDW:sba

Enclosure

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To: Scott Adams
Fr: Amy New
7 Feb 97

Senator Paul Wellstone
The Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

111 21 33 Christopher C. Taylor
504 James Ave. Apt. 316
Mankato, MN 56001
(507) 387-4527

Dear Senator Wellstone,

I am writing to you today to express my concern about possible violations of federal law by Northern States Power (NSP). On Dec. 13, 1993, the Minnesota House of Representatives Committee on Jobs, Energy, and Community Development held a meeting to hear testimony on NSP's proposal to build a temporary nuclear waste storage facility at Prairie Island. I believe some of the testimony provides reasonable cause for federal officials to open an investigation.

The troubling testimony involved the only road to the nuclear power plant and the Prairie Island Indian Reservation. During last summer's floods, this road was at risk of flooding. The Goodhue County Commissioners were asked by the Mdewakanton Dakota Indians for assurances that this road, which is the only escape route for the Prairie Island residents, would remain open. When the Commissioners refused to make the road a priority, reservation officials contacted NSP. NSP planned on using helicopters to transport employees to and from the power plant. Thus, they weren't interested in helping the reservation residents. Only after reservation officials requested the assistance of the Bureau of Indian Affairs did the Commissioners and NSP negotiate with the residents. The reservation paid half the cost of keeping the road open and NSP paid the other half.

I am very concerned about two implications of this testimony. First, I was given the impression that NSP would be able to continue power generation at this plant even though the only road to the plant would be closed. How is this possible? If an accident occurred, would helicopters be sufficient transportation for moving employees out of the plant and emergency officials in? Is this system acceptable under the federal laws protecting employees and the laws governing the operation of nuclear power plants? Second, NSP apparently had made no provisions for the evacuation of the Prairie Island residents. The reservation residents include elderly people and children, some of whom live three blocks away from the power plant. I was under the impression that nuclear power plants must have an evacuation plan in order to get an operating permit. With the residents' escape route closed, wouldn't NSP's evacuation plan be wildly inaccurate and unacceptable? Thus, shouldn't their operating permit have been suspended until a proper plan was submitted?

As a mere citizen of Minnesota, I am not in a position to investigate the legalities of the incidents disclosed in testimony. But I am very concerned about them. I urge you to contact the appropriate authorities and encourage them to look into the incidents of this summer.

Thanks in advance for any assistance you can provide.

Sincerely,

Christopher C. Taylor

Christopher C. Taylor

CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SYSTEM
DOCUMENT PREPARATION CHECKLIST

This checklist is to be submitted with each document (or group of Qs/As) sent for filing into the CCS.

1. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DOCUMENT(S) 7/11. 40 Sen Wellstone
2. TYPE OF DOCUMENT ☒ Correspondence ☐ Hearings (Qs/As)
3. DOCUMENT CONTROL ☐ Sensitive (NRC Only) ☒ Non-sensitive
4. CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE and SUBCOMMITTEES (if applicable)
- _____ Congressional Committee
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5. SUBJECT CODES
- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
6. SOURCE OF DOCUMENTS
- (a) _____ 5520 (document name) _____
- (b) ☒ Scan (c) _____ Attachments
- (d) _____ Rekey (e) _____ Other _____
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