



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

April 30, 2020

Mark E. Barker
Executive Assistant
Blue Ridge Environmental
Defense League
1828 Brandon Ave. SW
Roanoke, VA 24015

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO REQUEST BY THE BLUE RIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE
LEAGUE TO EXTEND OR SUSPEND PUBLIC HEARINGS AND PUBLIC
COMMENT PERIODS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

Dear Mr. Barker:

Thank you for your email to Chairman Svinicki dated March 15, 2020, requesting suspension of all upcoming public hearings and extension or suspension of public comment periods in light of the COVID-19 public health emergency. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) continues to work on behalf of the American people during this time and remains committed to engaging the public in regulatory and policy decisions. The NRC is aware of the challenges caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency and is currently evaluating timeframes for public engagement opportunities on a case-by-case basis. When deciding whether to extend or suspend public engagement schedules, the NRC will consider the unique circumstances of each activity, the specific impacts caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency, and the significance of the activity in meeting the NRC's mission objectives. Changes in schedules for public comment opportunities will be noticed in the *Federal Register* under the associated regulations.gov Docket ID for the applicable item. The NRC's Documents for Public Comment webpage (<https://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/doc-comment.html>) includes a subscription link that can be used to provide alerts when the webpage is updated. The NRC is also considering postponing public meetings or reorganizing them to take advantage of communication technology, such as teleconference, videoconference, webinars, and other means. The NRC's Public Meetings and Involvement webpage (<https://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/public-meetings.html>) will be updated to reflect these changes as applicable. Please feel free to contact John Tappert of my staff at (301) 415-2486 or by email at PublicCommentExtensionCovid.Resource@nrc.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John W. Lubinski, Director
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

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