

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

September 26, 1979

Joseph M. Hendrie
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Chairman Hendrie:

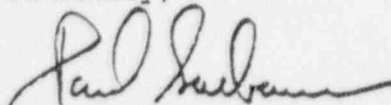
I am writing to express my concerns over the operation of two nuclear power reactors in Montgomery County, Maryland. Until recently most residents of Montgomery County were unaware of the existence of these reactors located at the Naval Hospital in Bethesda and the National Bureau of Standards in Gaithersburg. Since the presence of these reactors was first acknowledged, published reports have described an apparent radiation leakage at the National Bureau of Standards reactor, further heightening public concern over this matter.

It is my understanding that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is investigating the leakage incident at the National Bureau of Standards. I urge you to broaden the scope of the inquiry by examining the general necessity and safety of nuclear operations at both the Gaithersburg site and the Bethesda site. Such an inquiry would appear to be the most satisfactory method of addressing the legitimate concerns that have been raised by residents of Montgomery County.

The unfortunate occurrence at Three Mile Island underscores the need for diligent safety controls and credible public information on nuclear installations. I urge you to take appropriate action to insure the safety of these reactors and to address the public concern that has been raised.

With best regards,

Sincerely,



Paul S. Sarbanes
United States Senator

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