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JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.
DELAWARE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0802

January 30, 1997

Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson
Chairwoman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairwoman Jackson:

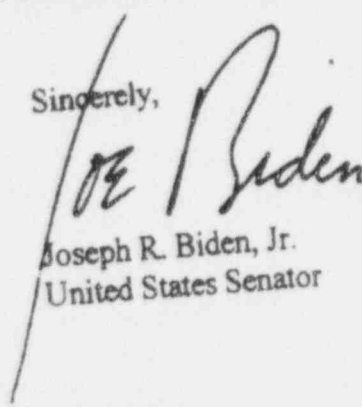
I am writing to commend the NRC for its recent decision to place Salem I and II on the watch list, and to further impress upon you the importance of a full Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) vote prior to restarting Salem II.

As I have steadfastly argued, placing the Salem facilities on the watch list is an important public acknowledgment of and step toward correcting the plants' long standing problems. This decision and the NRC's added oversight of the Salem facilities during the ongoing shutdown period have done much to restore confidence in the Commission. I was, however, somewhat disappointed to learn that Salem's watch list category II classification will not automatically require a full Commission vote prior to restart.

In my January 13 correspondence to you, I asked that the full Commission vote to determine whether to put Salem II back on line, as opposed to leaving this decision solely to the NRC's Region I Administrator. I understand that NRC's response is forthcoming. The watch list announcement seems to me to corroborate my claim that Salem II's record of accidents, mismanagement, fines, and downtime dictates the personal involvement of each commissioner in any restart review. As you know, such a vote would not be unprecedented; the Connecticut Millstone plants currently on the watch list will need formal Commission approval prior to restarting, for example.

I hope that you will seriously consider my request, particularly in light of the conclusions reached by the NRC in making the Salem watch list determination. I eagerly await your decision.

Sincerely,


Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
United States Senator

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