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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

BETTINA POIRIER, MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR
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May 15, 2012

The Honorable Gregory Jaczko
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Jaczko:

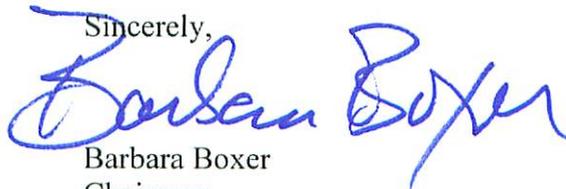
On February 8, 2012, I wrote to ask the Nuclear Regulation Commission (NRC) to review the safety of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station after problems were discovered with the facility's redesigned steam generators. You committed to conducting a thorough review before deciding whether to approve the restart of the reactors.

Since my letter to you, the media and others have raised concerns that design changes in the San Onofre replacement steam generators contributed to accelerated wear in tubes carrying radioactive water. Recent media reports quote a Southern California Edison (SCE) executive as saying, "We are thinking that this is probably a design defect."

Among other requirements, NRC rules state that a nuclear power plant operator must obtain a license amendment for any change that would result in more than a "minimal increase in the likelihood" of a malfunction of a structure, system, or component important to safety. SCE determined that such an amendment was not necessary for its redesigned steam generators.

Please provide me with a written summary that describes NRC's plans for establishing whether SCE's replacement of the steam generators required a license amendment, as well as any documents related to NRC's review of the design change. In addition, provide me with all documents in the NRC's possession or control related to SCE's determination that a license amendment was not necessary. Please deliver these documents to my Committee office by May 21, 2012. I also have requested from SCE all documents related to their determination. Contact Terrance Horner or Grant Cope (202/224-8832) with any questions.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer
Chairman