

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 16, 2019

The Honorable Kristine Svinicki
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop O14-F2
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Svinicki:

We write regarding the License Renewal Application (LRA; Docket No. 50-443) and License Amendment Request (LAR 16-03; Docket No. 50-443) for the Seabrook Station nuclear power plant and request that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) provide New Hampshire residents and interested stakeholders a meaningful opportunity to participate in the license review process. Specifically, we respectfully request that the NRC hold a round of public information sessions in potentially affected communities and ensure that interested parties are allowed to present their concerns to the Commission prior to the issuance of your final actions.

The discovery of the first instance of alkali-silica reaction at a nuclear power plant in the United States at Seabrook has drawn much public interest. We have heard from our constituents who are wary of the possible impacts of the concrete degradation at Seabrook Station. We have also received the enclosed letter from the C-10 Research and Education Foundation expressing concern that the license review process prevents the full participation of the public and intervening stakeholders prior to the issuance of the license amendment and renewed license. In order to address these concerns, we encourage the NRC to make a concerted effort to increase public participation throughout the remainder of the license renewal and license amendment process.

As you are aware, NRC's license renewal and license amendment review process for Seabrook Station has currently provided only two opportunities for the public to contribute comments to the Commission, both of which are required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The first was in 2011 when the NRC issued its draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) and the second was in 2013 when the NRC issued its draft supplement to the draft SEIS. Outside of the required NEPA review, there have been no formal opportunities for public comment and the NRC's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) has held only three public meetings on this topic in the past five years.

In that time, the ACRS issued an inspection report that did not identify any major findings or violations and issued a final safety evaluation report, concluding that the plant meets the necessary requirements and is safe for continued operation. Although these reports are available to the public, the NRC has made limited attempts to educate the public and interveners on the findings of these reports.

We acknowledge that the NRC's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) will hold a hearing later this year regarding the LAR, and we support the ASLB's decision to hold a hearing at the request of the C-10 Research and Education Foundation. However, we remain concerned that this hearing will occur months after NRC makes its decision on whether to grant the LRA and LAR for Seabrook. While we recognize that ASLB rulings can be retroactively enforced, given the few opportunities for public comment on the license renewal, we believe the timeliness of stakeholder engagement on the LAR is critical and the hearing should be held prior to the review of the license renewal.

It is imperative that New Hampshire residents have ample time to review, understand and weigh decisions that will impact their lives. We urge NRC to take the necessary steps to hear and address the concerns of Granite Staters before issuing its decision on Seabrook Station's renewed operating license and amendment, and we welcome the opportunity to work with you to promote an open and transparent licensing decision.

Thank you for your attention to this request and for all of your work to ensure the safety and security of our nuclear energy sources.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress

Enclosures (1): Letter from C-10 Education and Research Foundation

CC: Peter Riccardella, Chairman, Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Jeff Baran, Commissioner, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Stephen Burns, Commissioner, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
David Wright, Commissioner, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Annie Caputo, Commissioner, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission