August 9, 2012

The Honorable Allison M. Macfarlane
Chairman
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-001

Re: San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) Safety Concerns

Dear Chairman Macfarlane:

As Mayor of one of the largest cities in South Orange County, Mission Viejo, welcomes your appointment to the Chair of the NRC. I look forward to your management over one of the more pressing issues our county faces, addressing the future of nuclear power. On behalf of our constituents, I am writing to express my concerns regarding the San Onofre nuclear power plant in particular.

The City of Mission Viejo City Council received public testimony at its meeting on July 2, 2012, regarding concerns on the safety of San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS). At this meeting, the City was asked by members of the public to send a letter voicing safety concerns to the various regulatory agencies that have oversight and regulatory functions over SONGS.

The City of Mission Viejo places public safety as its highest priority, both with respect to emergency preparedness and response. The City’s Emergency Services Division serves as one of the largest hubs of emergency preparedness activities in South Orange County. Some of our accomplishments in preparedness include establishing the City as a Point of Dispensing (POD) site certified agency, which allows the City to coordinate with the County of Orange under the incident management system to deliver emergency supplies to the community during a disaster. The City has an established employee American Red Cross sheltering team that allows the City to deploy staff to sheltering sites in response to disasters. In 2004, the City developed the Community Emergency Preparedness Academy (CEPA), which teaches residents to prepare their neighborhoods to be self-reliant in the days and weeks following a large-scale disaster. Both cities are proud to be an integral part of the emergency response community that makes up the Orange County Operational Area emergency response network.
Members of the City Council and City staff have attended meetings held by Southern California Edison (SCE) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to become educated about the recent safety concerns regarding SONGS Units 2 and 3. Specifically, City representatives were briefed by SCE officials regarding the extent of the unexpected wear to Units 2 and 3 and the radiation leak from Unit 2 that prompted the shutdown of the plant. We are encouraged by the fact that that SCE and NRC officials are erring on the side of caution by shutting down both units until a determination can be made by the scientific community regarding the cause of the unexpected tube wear.

As Council members, public safety is our primary goal, and it is our duty to be the voice of our constituents. As such, the City is requesting that the US NRC, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), and SCE continue to take prudent and cautionary steps while a careful analysis of the excessive tube wear is conducted and thorough review of the plant’s future viability is determined. The City of Mission Viejo City Council requests that all involved agencies take a careful, methodical approach while considering any potential reopening of the plant. Mission Viejo is encouraged by the fact that the NRC plans on holding numerous public meetings to keep the process transparent and will allow the community to become educated, informed and be heard on this matter.

Sincerely,

Frank Ury
Mayor, City of Mission Viejo

c: Mission Viejo City Council
   Mission Viejo City Manager
   South Orange County Mayors
   South Orange County City Managers
   Orange County Supervisor Pat Bates
   Frank Wasko, SCE
   CPUC
   Interjurisdictional Planning Committee
   Senator Mimi Walters
   Senator Barbara Boxer
   Senator Dianne Feinstein
   Congressman Gary Miller
   Congressman John Campbell
   Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez