

NEWS FROM NIRS

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Contact: Linda Gunter, (202) 328-0002

Attorneys General Request Increased Defenses at Nuclear Reactors  
up to 9/11 Prevention Standards

WASHINGTON, DC - Eight state attorneys general and more than 850 individual petitioners to date have requested that the federal government significantly raise defenses around the country's inadequately protected nuclear power stations. The Petition for Rulemaking, authored by the Committee to Bridge the Gap (CBG) and organized by Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS), asks the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to increase site capabilities at U.S commercial nuclear power to repel a minimum of 19 attackers, the same number that operated on 9/11. Attorneys general from Arkansas, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Illinois, New York and Wisconsin, submitted a letter to the NRC calling on the government to boost defenses at reactors. Delaware's attorney general sent separate supportive comments.

"The interest of terrorists in attacking nuclear power plants is a matter of record," the attorneys general stated in the letter. "At minimum, the upgraded design basis threat should require defenses against attacks by air, water, or land and by groups at least as large as that involved in the 9/11 attacks. The NRC should upgrade the threat to reflect the realities of 2005."

Specifically, the petitioners want nuclear power stations to erect obstructions to prevent catastrophic damage from an aircraft attack similar to those on 9/11.

"It is deeply disturbing that, more than three years after 9/11, nuclear reactors, the nation's most dangerous sites, still have no protection against air attack and must only protect against attackers in far smaller numbers than seen on 9/11," said Daniel Hirsch, President of CBG. The nuclear watchdog group is the author of the pending Petition for Rulemaking to the NRC supported by the attorneys general. "It seems a no-brainer that reactors should be