

July 26, 2012

Dear President Obama,

I am writing to say that although I generally agree with your policies on healthcare, foreign relations and the economy, there is one major issue about which I am totally disappointed with your presidency, and that is the matter of energy and the environment.

Your appointment of Dr. Stephen Chu, of the Argonne Laboratory, to the position of Secretary of Energy has heavily weighted your energy policies in the direction of nuclear, and this at a time when the technology for solar, wind, and tidal power is available. I cannot understand how a man of your intelligence, especially after the catastrophe of Fukushima, can allow the Department of Energy to promote a new bomb factory in Oak Ridge, TN; and allow the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to extend the licenses of our aged nuclear reactors virtually to perpetuity; and allow TVA to burn very hot plutonium/MOX fuel in an old, unsafe reactor like Browns Ferry. Are you aware that Browns Ferry is the only reactor in the country to have a red flag NRC inspection?

If I were cynical, I would think that the Excelon Corporation bought you many years ago. But I don't want to believe that. Instead I imagine that you do not have time to study the issues of nuclear power and that you are depending upon your not-very-objective experts to guide you through these complex scientific issues. I believe that they have led you down a path that threatens the health and safety of the American people, and indeed, of the whole world.

Do you realize that nuclear reactors release routine emissions of radiation? . . . that these emissions go into the air, water and soil, consequently into the food chain? . . . that if this radiation is ingested through food or water, or inhaled, the person or animal that consumes it is placed at risk for cancer? . . . that when our bodies also contain toxic chemicals and are exposed to radiation, the effect is synergistic? . . . that radiation is cumulative in the body and that is why older people are prone to cancer? . . . that unborn and young children are among the most vulnerable to birth defects, cancers and leukemia? . . . that when living creatures are exposed to radiation, their damaged DNA can cause mutations that could forever change the evolution of the human race? I'll bet that Sect. Chu, being a nuclear scientist, hasn't told you these things, but physicians like Dr. Helen Caldicott ([Nuclear Power is Not the Answer](#)) and Dr. John Gofman ([Poisoned Power](#)) told the world so years ago. You should keep their books on your bedside table.

I have two little granddaughters who live near Philadelphia, within 50 miles of multiple nuclear reactors, and who are routinely exposed to radiation. My heart grows cold at the thought. Have you considered what effects radiation might be having on your own beautiful daughters? Even without another nuclear catastrophe, they too are being exposed, to routine emissions and to fallout from Fukushima. Future generations are at stake.

In the event of a Fukushima-like disaster in this country, millions of people could die slow and painful deaths. Just within the last year or two, reactors in the U.S. have been threatened by floods, earthquakes, and tornadoes, yet your government persists down this suicidal course to more nuclear reactors, more bomb plants, more nuclear waste. Please think about the consequences and change this direction. And please replace Sect. Chu, and put the government's efforts and money into truly clean and renewable sources of energy—sun, wind, and water.

Yours truly,

Kathleen R. Ferris