



STATE OF UTAH

SCOTT M. MATHESON
GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SALT LAKE CITY

84114

January 2, 1979

The Honorable James R. Schlesinger
Secretary, Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585

Re: Radiation Fallout and Public Health in Utah

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to request your assistance and cooperation in connection with the current re-evaluation of the public health impact of atomic testing conducted at the Nevada test site from the early 1950's to the present. I have recently become aware of facts that have given me cause to be concerned about the Nevada testing and attendant fallout. These concerns led me to request of the President that the federal government, in cooperation with the State, undertake a thorough re-examination of past studies on the health impact of the testing and design and implement new and more comprehensive studies. In a press release issued by the White House on November 27, 1978, the President directed Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Califano to undertake this effort and directed the Secretary of Defense to "cooperate fully in this endeavor."

In the statement of November 27, the President also asked Secretary Califano to "work closely with the State of Utah as he proceeds." A joint State-Federal Radiation Effects Study Management Committee has already been established, with members from H.E.W., my staff, the Utah Division of Health, the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta and the University of Utah Medical School. This committee is to oversee the re-evaluation of past studies, as well as the formulation and implementation of any new studies.

In order that my staff and I may knowledgeably participate in this study effort, we must be fully informed of all relevant facts. As you know, the Atomic Energy Commission, a predecessor of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which is a component of D.O.E., was primarily responsible for all activities relating to the Nevada testing and for studying the effects of radiation. We have reason to believe that a vast amount of pertinent information exists in the files of your department and would like access to that information.

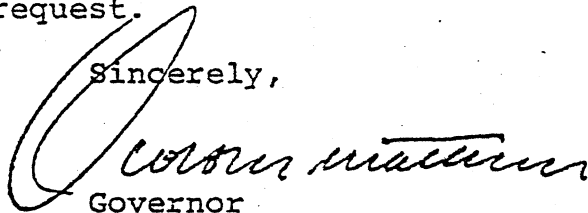
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The purpose of this letter is to request that your office assume responsibility for identifying all pertinent information in the files of the Department of Defense and its constituent agencies and for releasing that information to me. Should some of the information be restricted, I would like that information identified so that we can take steps to arrange for its release. In an effort to be as specific as possible, and recognizing that I do not know what information may be available, I will itemize the categories to which this request relates:

Any information regarding fallout from the testing, including its dispersion and concentration; any information regarding the long- and short-term health effects on life forms of exposure to fallout; any information relating to precautions that were proposed or actually taken to protect life forms from the effect of fallout resulting from the Nevada tests. Obviously this list is general, but once we know better what is available, we can and will be more specific.

It is imperative that the management committee have full knowledge of all the facts so that the new health studies are as thorough and comprehensive as possible. For that reason, I would appreciate your response to this request as soon as possible. I would also like an indication of the time required for you to expeditiously comply with the request.

Sincerely,



Governor

SMM:mlw

cc: The Honorable Joseph Califano
Mr. Eugene Eidenberg
Ms. Sue Foster, H.E.W.
Dr. Lyman J. Olsen,
Director, Utah Division of Health
Dr. Chase Peterson, University of Utah
Medical School