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To the Editor:

Your Feb. 10 article, "Nuclear Safety Study Denied Data," said the Nuclear Regulatory Commission refused to share classified information about security and potential terrorist threats with a National Academy of Sciences panel studying the safety of transporting spent nuclear fuel. This is a grave mischaracterization of the Academy's report, and it does your readers an injustice by discounting the report's conclusion that the transportation of spent fuel is safe when conducted according to NRC's strict regulations.

The report's initial subject was the safety of spent fuel transportation. The 15 eminent scientists and experts on the panel were selected with this mission in mind. After they expanded the study to include security, it was discovered that only four members had the proper clearances to view the extensive security assessments NRC has conducted on this important issue.

The NRC fully supported the inclusion of security in the Academy's study, because we believe the news is good. We provided the four panel members that hold the proper security clearances with whatever information they needed. To say that we obstructed the National Academy of Sciences in its efforts is flat wrong.

The NRC welcomes the National Academy's conclusion that the transportation of spent nuclear fuel is safe. Our agency is confident in the safety and security of spent fuel transportation in the United States.

Regards,

E. William Brach
Director, Spent Fuel Project Office
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission

CONTACT INFO:

Mr. Brach: 301-415-8500

Or: David McIntyre, Office of Public Affairs, at this email address (dtm@nrc.gov) or 301-415-8206.