



Obama defends nuclear power as radiation traces reach California

By **Eartha Jane Melzer** | 03.18.11 / 2:47 pm | [More from The Michigan Messenger](#)

“Dangerous levels” of radiation will not reach American soil from Japan and nuclear power remains “an important part of our energy future,” President Obama said in remarks at the White House today.

The [Associated Press](#) reports Obama tried to reassure the country as the U.S. ramps up efforts to measure the spread of radioactive material from the damaged Fukushima nuclear complex in Japan.

Obama said that he has asked the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to conduct a comprehensive review of the 104 nuclear power plants that provide 20 percent of the U.S. electricity supply.

A leading industry group agreed with the review.

“A review of our nuclear plants is an appropriate step after an event of this scale, and we expect that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission will conduct its own assessment,” said Marvin Fertel, president of the Nuclear Energy Institute. “The industry’s highest priority is the safe operation of 104 reactors in 31 states and we will incorporate lessons learned from this accident...”

Traces of radiation presumed to be from the Fukushima disaster [were detected](#) on the U.S. West Coast today.

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