



Chairman Mike Simpson

*Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and
Related Agencies, House Committee on Appropriations*

Nuclear Regulatory Commission FY 2017 Budget Hearing Opening Statement As Prepared February 10, 2016

The hearing will come to order.

I would like to thank all of the Subcommittee Members again for their hard work on the fiscal year 2016 bill and I look forward to working with you during the busy year ahead!

Although we just received the President's budget yesterday, we begin our oversight hearings today. The Appropriations Committee wants to move all 12 bills under regular order, within the caps that are set in law, and finish our work on time. We will need to maintain an aggressive schedule in order to conduct the thorough oversight that is needed to ensure that the fiscal year 2017 Energy and Water appropriations bill provides responsible funding to the programs within its jurisdiction.

Today's hearing is on the budget of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

We have before us Stephen Burns, the Chairman of the Commission and his fellow Commissioners, Kristine Svinicki, William Ostendorff, and Jeff Baran. Thank you all for being here today – and – I would like to congratulate you on your leadership and the progress that has been made in recent months to right-size the NRC.

I admit that, initially, I questioned NRC's commitment to right-sizing. I was very troubled by the letter the NRC sent to us during last year's budget process. While I am confident that had the NRC received a lower appropriation – you – the Commissioners – would not have actually voted to adopt reductions that could risk health and safety before a more thorough review of lower priority activities was conducted – it was still disappointing to see a letter that suggested you would.

That having been said, since then, the NRC has taken important first steps towards right-sizing. I congratulate you - and I look forward to further discussion on continuing these promising efforts.

The Commission plays an important role in ensuring that our nation can count on the clean and reliable energy that our nuclear power plants provide. The NRC must continue to assure the protection of public health and safety and provide a timely and predictable licensing process for the nuclear industry. In addition, we must move forward on long term waste storage. And – the Commission must be prepared to advance new and innovative nuclear technologies.

I look forward to your thoughts on all of these issues.

I would also ask the witnesses to please ensure that the hearing record, questions for the record, and any supporting information requested by the Subcommittee are delivered in final form to us no later than four weeks from the time you receive them. Members who have additional questions for the record will have until the close of business tomorrow to provide them to the Subcommittee office.

With that, I would like to welcome our Ranking Member, Ms. Marcy Kaptur to our first hearing of the new budget season and yield her time for any opening remarks that she may have.