

Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Subcommittee on Energy, Climate, and Grid Security
**“American Nuclear Expansion: Updating Policies for Efficient,
Predictable Licensing and Deployment”**
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As prepared for delivery

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And welcome everyone.

Today, we continue our work on restoring American leadership in nuclear energy and technology.

It’s critical to both our economic and national security.

Expanding American nuclear energy and increasing deployment of American nuclear technology both here and abroad...

...is essential for reducing emissions...

...providing reliable, affordable, clean energy to Americans.

...and for building durable economic and strategic relationships around the world.

In 1954, Congress established the Atomic Energy Act, which has been foundational to our nuclear leadership for nearly 70 years.

Today, the Atomic Energy Act remains a guide for us to build common defense and security, and to capture the peaceful benefits of nuclear technology:

It states: “to make *the maximum contribution* to the general welfare...”

To “increase the standard of living and strengthen free competition and private enterprise.”

This is the policy that has steered the development of American nuclear leadership...incentivized our innovators...

...and enabled American industry to lead the world in nuclear energy for more than forty years.

As a result, American innovation and nuclear energy deployment remain the dominant designs around the world.

We set the global standard for safety and security that continues to this day.

America must continue to lead, especially as our adversaries actively challenge our nuclear leadership.

China and Russia seek to dominate emerging nuclear markets, and control supply chains for these technologies and for fuels.

In recent years their influence in these markets has grown.

Energy and Commerce must lead the way to reverse this trend.

Fortunately, we know our allies are eager for American nuclear leadership and technology.

We saw this on recent visits to the Czech Republic and to Poland, nations who've embraced the promise and security of nuclear technologies, seeking American know-how and support.

The American nuclear industry is ready to lead...

...from NuScale, TerraPower, GE-Hitachi, and X- Energy's small modular reactors to OKLO and Project PELE's [*pronounced PAY-LAY*] micro-reactors...

...to the new operating AP-1000 reactors at Plant Vogtle [*VO-GULL*] in Georgia.

These are the kinds of innovative technologies that Poland and other U.S. allies are looking for to win the future.

In order to restore American leadership and unleash these new technologies, both at home and abroad, there is an urgent need to make sure the licensing, regulation, and oversight of the nuclear industry is predictable and efficient...

...is risk-informed, performance based, and protective of health and safety...

...and serves the foundational policies that Congress has established.

This was a clear message from many of the stakeholders who responded to our bi-partisan requests for information this past April.

Many of the bills we will discuss today reflect an effort to meet the needs expressed by nuclear policy thought leaders.

Several bills refocus the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Energy to ensure they're carrying out the foundational nuclear policies that have been established by Congress.

The bills would update how agencies implement their responsibilities to be sure they will be efficient, predictable, and risk informed.

They'd also ensure the agencies will not get in the way of innovation and deployment...

...but instead serve the national interest by providing for the safe, reliable deployment of nuclear energy.

Today we will examine in more detail what these bills will do and discuss how they can be enhanced.

While we may have differences on some of the legislation with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, I'm hopeful this hearing can help us address those differences and continue the process for developing bi-partisan legislation.

This is how we win the future, restore American nuclear leadership, and strengthen our energy security.

I'd like to thank our witnesses for being here today.

And I yield back.