

Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Opening Statement—Subcommittee on Energy, Climate, & Grid
Security Hearing:
“The Fiscal Year 2025 Nuclear Regulatory Commission Budget”
July 23, 2024
As prepared for delivery

Welcome Chairman Hanson and Commissioners. It is good to have you back before the Committee.

American leadership in nuclear technology is critical to our economic and national security.

It’s how we win the future with reliable, affordable, and clean energy to power our way of life, keep the lights on, build stronger communities, and achieve economic prosperity.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s safety mission serves a critical role in the success of the American nuclear industry.

Making sure NRC performs this mission to achieve the great promise of nuclear energy is your core responsibility.

Since you last testified before the Committee in June of last year, Congress developed and enacted several important laws to help unleash the full benefits of American nuclear energy.

This Committee led on passing legislation to eliminate reliance on Russian uranium and legislation to secure and build our own nuclear fuel industry right here in the U.S.

We also extended the Price Anderson Act for forty years, ensuring long-term liability coverage for reactors, which is essential for revitalizing the industry and getting more reliable, affordable power into our homes and businesses.

And, perhaps most relevant for today, the Committee developed the Atomic Energy Advancement Act...landmark legislation signed into law earlier this month as the ADVANCE Act.

This legislation will establish requirements and incentives to expand the use of nuclear energy and its many benefits for the United States.

It will drive a more efficient, timely, and predictable NRC licensing process, which will encourage investment by reducing licensing costs for advanced technologies...

...and facilitate the deployment of innovative new nuclear energy technologies—from reactors, to fusion, to fuels and fuel facilities.

Taken together, these laws will strengthen our ability to compete globally and help power our future.

The ADVANCE Act takes significant steps to align NRC's mission with the policy of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to QUOTE...

...“make *the maximum contribution* to the general welfare...increase the standard of living...and strengthen free competition and private enterprise...through the development, use, and control of atomic energy.”

With the ADVANCE Act, Congress spoke loud and clear about NRC's role. NRC cannot be a barrier to innovation and deployment.

A strong American nuclear industry is critical to U.S. energy security...by helping us compete with Russia and China, and meet our growing energy needs here at home.

With this legislation, NRC now has the tools and direction from Congress necessary to unleash American nuclear energy and get back to its core mission.

America already has the best operating fleet in the world.

The performance and safety of our nuclear plants is unmatched.

And there are numerous promising and advanced nuclear technologies that simply require NRC licensing approval to begin deployment.

This hearing is an opportunity for this committee to better understand how you plan to implement these new laws as Congress intended and meet the urgency of the moment.

A robust and growing nuclear industry is critical for reducing emissions, and providing reliable, affordable, clean energy to the American people.

The Energy and Commerce Committee, in coordination with our Senate partners, has worked hard this Congress to come together on solutions to unleash America's nuclear energy...that will improve people's lives and make our country stronger and more prosperous.

I look forward to discussing next steps to ensure the NRC is implementing the law effectively.

I yield back.