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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

### COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-3641

Minority (202) 225-2927

March 10, 2026

Mr. John Williams  
Senior VP, Technical Services and External Affairs  
Southern Company  
601 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Suite 800S  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Williams:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Energy on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, to testify at the hearing entitled “American Energy Dominance: Dawn of the New Nuclear Era.”

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Wednesday, November 12, 2025. Your responses should be mailed to Seth Ricketts Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 and e-mailed to [Seth.Ricketts@mail.house.gov](mailto:Seth.Ricketts@mail.house.gov).

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert E. Latta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "L".

Robert E. Latta  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Energy

cc: Kathy Castor, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy

Attachment

## **Additional Questions for the Record**

### **The Honorable Robert Latta (R-OH)**

1. I have been interested in encouraging the development of reprocessing spent nuclear fuel. My legislation with the gentleman from California's fiftieth district, the Nuclear REFUEL Act, seeks to streamline licensing requirements for nuclear fuel recycling facilities to enhance supply chain resilience and security of nuclear fuel for advanced nuclear power plants.
  - a. You have experience as a fuel buyer. What would be the considerations for the economics of reprocessed fuel?
2. Our current operating fleet relies heavily on critical minerals such as Lithium 7. Li-7 is yet another critical mineral that China and Russia are large producers of. Given the Trump Administration's emphasis on the importance of critical minerals and the actions already taken by the administration to help revive conventional nuclear and bolster the emerging advanced nuclear industry, are there any supply chain concerns you have regarding Lithium 7 or other critical minerals?
  - a. Where does the current operating fleet source Lithium 7?
  - b. Do you have any recommendations on how to build out the domestic supply chain of Li-7?
3. As the United States looks to scale AP1000 and advanced nuclear deployment, where are the most significant remaining gaps in the domestic nuclear supply chain and fuel cycle, and how should federal policy prioritize addressing them?
4. I'd like elaboration on your testimony concerning Congressional support that could enable the development of more nuclear units:
  - a. Specifically, you mention financial support to mitigate macroeconomic tail risk, what is that and why can't industry manage that risk?
  - b. Can you explain why this type of support would not end up paying for mistakes that a company like Southern Company or any other company responsible for building a plant might make?
  - c. How long would Congress and the federal government need to financially support this industry? When do you think the "nth of a kind" is reached, and what does that mean for nuclear development going forward?
5. Regarding future deployment, how do existing nuclear sites reduce project risk, cost, and timelines compared to greenfield development, and how may federal policy better support redevelopment of these sites?

6. Southern Company, TerraPower, and CORE POWER are involved in molten chloride fast reactor research with DOE's Idaho National Laboratory through the molten chloride reactor experiment. What this is really about is U.S. energy dominance leveraging innovative nuclear technology

Unlike traditional reactors that use solid fuel rods and water as a coolant, molten salt reactors rely on liquid fuel—a mixture of salts containing fissile material. This design enables higher operating temperatures, improved fuel efficiency, and enhanced safety.

It also opens the door to new applications, including compact nuclear systems for ships and AI data centers. This technology is the catalyst for next-generation global nuclear leadership for the United States.

- I understand the joint work at Idaho National Lab recently achieved a breakthrough in fuel synthesis, marking the first time in history that chloride-based molten-salt fuel has been produced for a fast reactor. What is the significance of that breakthrough?
- What may Congress do to support this research and ensure that MCFR technology is developed, de-risked, and commercialized for its full range of applications in a timely manner?

### **The Honorable Troy Balderson (R-OH)**

1. We've seen several technology and data center companies make big bets on SMR technologies. These are companies with a history of investing in early-stage, innovative technologies that become commercialized and are widely used today. Why do you think these bets are being made on SMR technology today?
  - How important is it for us to accelerate both permitting and technology development of SMRs to win the AI race with China?
  - Would the growth of SMRs as the next wave of carbon-free power technologies be possible without data center growth in the United States?
2. How should the US Department of Energy best allocate loan credit authority through the Office of Energy Dominance Financing to accelerate small modular reactor development?
3. Accelerating capacity in the near term is critical. While constructing new nuclear facilities is imperative, more needs to be done to improve the output of existing nuclear facilities. How can the United States Department of Energy and the Office of Energy Dominance Financing encourage investments that improve efficiencies from existing nuclear facilities through uprates to support meeting demand in the near term?