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6 MARKUP OF:

7 H.R. 3978, NUCLEAR REFUEL (RECYCLING EFFICIENT FUELS
8 UTILIZING EXPEDITED LICENSING) ACT;

9 H.R. 9612, AMERICAN ENRICHMENT DEPLOYMENT ACT;

10 H.R. 5549, EFFICIENT NUCLEAR LICENSING HEARINGS ACT;

11 H.R. 9613, NUCLEAR ADVISORY COMMITTEE REFORM ACT;

12 H.R. 9614, NRC STAFF PAY ALIGNMENT ACT; AND

13 H.R. 9084, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NUCLEAR TRANSPARENCY ACT

14 TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2026

15 House of Representatives,

16 Subcommittee on Energy,

17 Committee on Energy and Commerce,

18 Washington, D.C.

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22 The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:15 a.m. in
23 Room 2123, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Robert E.
24 Latta [chairman of the subcommittee], presiding.

25 Present: Representatives Latta, Weber, Palmer, Allen,
26 Balderson, Pfluger, Harshbarger, Miller-Meeks, Bentz, Fry,
27 Lee, Langworthy, Rulli, Evans, Goldman, Fedorchak, Guthrie

28 (ex officio); Castor, Peters, Menendez, Mullin, McClellan,
29 Matsui, Tonko, Veasey, Schrier, Fletcher, Ocasio-Cortez, and
30 Pallone (ex officio).

31 Staff Present: Ansley Boylan, Director of Operations;
32 Jessica Donlon, General Counsel; Andrew Furman, Professional
33 Staff Member; Sydney Greene, Director of Finance and
34 Logistics; Calvin Huggins, Clerk; Megan Jackson, Staff
35 Director; Olivia Jansen, Staff Assistant; Noah Jackson,
36 Clerk; AT Johnson, Special Advisor; Brayden Lacefield,
37 Special Assistant; Mary Martin, Chief Counsel; Joel Miller,
38 Chief Counsel; Ben Mullaney, Press Secretary; Ryan Murphy,
39 Director of Member Services; Brice Ogle, Special Assistant;
40 Claire Richey, Clerk; Seth Ricketts, Clerk; Jake Riith, Staff
41 Assistant; Jackson Rudden, Clerk; Chris Sarley, Member
42 Services/Stakeholder Director; Timothy Trimble, Staff
43 Assistant; and Matt VanHyfte, Communications Director; Jordan
44 Antwi, Minority Intern; Waverly Gordon, Minority Deputy Staff
45 Director and General Counsel; Tiffany Guarascio, Minority
46 Staff Director; Perry Hamilton, Minority Deputy Director,
47 Member Services and Outreach; Alyssa Kimura, Minority Intern;
48 Brendan Lopez, Minority Press Assistant; Kristopher Pittard,
49 Minority Professional Staff Member; Emma Roehrig, Minority
50 Staff Assistant; Andrew Souvall, Minority Director of
51 Communications, Outreach, and Member Services; Medha
52 Surampudy, Minority Professional Staff Member; Hannah Treger,

53 Minority Staff Assistant; and Tuley Wright, Minority Staff

54 Director, ENG.

55

56 *Mr. Latta. The subcommittee will come to order and the
57 chair recognizes himself for an opening statement.

58 In today's markup we consider six pieces of legislation
59 to improve the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's licensing
60 process and Department of Energy nuclear reporting, which
61 will help maintain momentum for U.S. nuclear deployment.

62 A robust and growing American nuclear industry is vital
63 to meet our nation's rapidly increasing energy demand. A
64 resilient nuclear supply chain is critical for U.S. economic,
65 energy, and national security. We need a robust nuclear
66 sector for our national security. We must increase nuclear
67 commerce with our allies and provide a more cost-effective
68 industrial base.

69 This subcommittee has already taken significant action
70 to optimize the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's regulatory
71 system and related policies to advance nuclear deployment and
72 the associated economic and security benefits for the nation.
73 Our bipartisan work two years ago led to the ADVANCE Act.
74 This law directed the NRC to align its mission for enabling
75 benefits of nuclear technology and to focus on efficiency,
76 reducing costs, and increasing predictability in the
77 permitting process, all while maintaining its position as the
78 world's premier leader in nuclear safety.

79 Our work also laid the foundation for a revitalized
80 domestic nuclear fuel industry. The Nuclear Fuel Security

81 Act provided funding to jump-start the development of
82 advanced fuels and the Prohibiting Russian Uranium Imports
83 Act banning the import of Russian fuels to create the market
84 conditions needed to incentivize new domestic fuel production
85 capacity.

86 Five of the bills under consideration today amend the
87 Atomic Energy Act to extend these policies we enacted last
88 Congress, eliminating unnecessary licensing steps and adding
89 clarity to reviews consistent with our ADVANCE Act reforms.
90 While we are still in a discussion on a couple of bills, our
91 conversations across the aisle reflect the same bipartisan
92 spirit that led to success two years ago.

93 We will consider H.R. 3978. The Nuclear Refuel Act,
94 which I am leading along with my colleague from California's
95 50th district, would clarify certain recycling facilities --
96 may be licensed under the same regulatory framework as other
97 fuel cycle facilities. This legislation builds on this
98 subcommittee's work to enable the support of our domestic
99 nuclear fuel cycle, and will result in efficient permitting
100 of changes to extract additional energy out of spent fuel.

101 H.R. 9612, the American Enrichment Deployment Act, led
102 by our colleagues from South Carolina's 7th and Washington's
103 8th districts, brings the licensing process for enrichment
104 facilities in line with other fuel cycle facilities. It is a
105 critical step to ensure efficient licensing, saving time and

106 money without undermining safety as we work to build our
107 critical fuel cycle infrastructure.

108 Also included in today's markup is the bipartisan H.R.
109 5549, the Efficient Nuclear Licensing Hearings Act, sponsored
110 by our colleagues from Virginia's 9th, Washington's 8th, and
111 Texas's 33rd congressional districts. This legislation would
112 save time and resources by eliminating an outdated
113 requirement that NRC holds a final, uncontested public
114 hearing on a license, even if no one requests the hearing.
115 This change saves time and money in the licensing process
116 both for the NRC and the licensees, while preserving
117 transparency and the public's ability to be involved and
118 informed in the licensing process.

119 We will consider H.R. 9613, the Nuclear Advisory
120 Committee Report Act, sponsored by our colleagues from
121 Tennessee's 1st district, which directs the Advisory
122 Committee on Reactor Safeguards, or ACRS, to focus on issues
123 that are new and novel and safety significant. The bill will
124 reduce unnecessary time and resources being spent on routine
125 licensing by the NRC. This continues to advance the
126 bipartisan goals of the ADVANCE Act, namely to make the NRC's
127 licensing process more risk informed and efficient.

128 H.R. 9614, the NRC Staff Pay Alignment Act, sponsored by
129 our colleague from New Jersey's 8th district, would align the
130 pay authority applicable to certain career SES employees with

131 pay authorities we provided in the ADVANCE Act. Maintaining
132 experience and competent leadership of the NRC is essential
133 for ensuring it carries out its mission efficiently.

134 Finally, we turn to the Department of Energy, also a key
135 player in enabling new nuclear deployment. H.R. 9084, the
136 Department of Energy Nuclear Transparency Act introduced by
137 the ranking member of the Energy Subcommittee, would require
138 DoE to announce and post licensing decisions for facilities
139 it permits, similar to what NRC does today. This is a
140 reasonable bill, and I look forward to moving it.

141 Again, I want to thank our colleagues across the aisle
142 and the minority staff and the -- or majority staff for all
143 the work they did for today's markup. I look forward to
144 continuing to work on a bipartisan bill -- on these bills --
145 support on these bills.

146 And with that I yield back the balance -- or I guess I
147 have run over my time, but I yield back and recognize the
148 gentlelady from Florida, the ranking member of the
149 subcommittee, for five minutes for an opening statement.

150 *Ms. Castor. Well, thank you, Chairman Latta. Good
151 morning. We are ready to mark up a good number of bipartisan
152 bills today. It comes at a time when Americans are grappling
153 with the unprecedented stress of higher costs, the higher
154 cost of living. It is affecting their ability to manage
155 their daily lives.

156 And policies out of Washington have not helped. In
157 fact, they have often made life more expensive. For example,
158 since the war in Iran began on February 28, Americans have
159 paid a total of \$56 billion more, or 477 more per household,
160 on the gas that they need to commute to work, run errands,
161 pick up their kids, and live their daily lives. Today's
162 national average gas price sits at \$3.87 per gallon, which is
163 about 30 percent higher than before the start of the war.

164 And beyond the pain at the pump, household electric
165 bills are up as much as 18 percent since January 2025.
166 Analysts predict that families will pay \$4,500 more over the
167 next 15 years, thanks to the extreme policies passed by the
168 Republican majority this year and the numerous cleaner,
169 cheaper energy projects killed by the Administration at a
170 time when energy demand is growing across the country.

171 We need more reliable power that keeps costs down and
172 pollution out of our communities, so today's bipartisan bills
173 are a good step. They continue a tradition of carefully
174 balancing safety, transparency, and efficiency to advance
175 American leadership in nuclear energy. And I am glad my
176 Republican colleagues are working with us on these -- on the
177 legislation here because nuclear energy can help meet rising
178 electricity demand and lower energy bills, but only if the
179 Federal Government can advance the -- can fulfill the duties
180 that Congress envisioned when we passed the Bipartisan

181 ADVANCE Act in 2024.

182 The Department of Energy's recent nuclear supply chain
183 announcement shows the scale of the opportunity: \$17.5
184 billion in loans for long lead components that could support
185 10 new large-scale reactors and power 10 million American
186 households and shorten deployment timelines by up to 3 years.

187 While nuclear energy can play a key role in powering our
188 future, it will not address our immediate challenges -- which
189 means the higher cost of everything right now. Attacking
190 clean, cheap energy while doubling down on polluting sources
191 is not an energy abundance strategy. It is a policy of
192 higher bills, fewer jobs, more pollution, and a less reliable
193 grid.

194 And even if we succeed in licensing and building nuclear
195 reactors in the United States, it doesn't help if we cannot
196 connect them to a modern grid in a timely manner. America
197 needs to build, yes, more firm, clean power like nuclear, but
198 also flexible energy storage -- sources like storage and more
199 transmission. Just last week the Department of Energy put
200 out their annual transmission needs study which emphasized
201 the need for interregional transmission to support
202 reliability, grid resilience, and demand growth.

203 We need strong and trustworthy regulators as well to
204 help us safely advance the next generation of nuclear energy,
205 but the NRC is under stress itself. The NRC commissioners

206 have warned they could be fired for refusing to rubber-stamp
207 a reactor. DOGE-affiliated staff with no nuclear safety
208 experience have forced out career experts. The NRC has lost
209 nearly 500 professional staff in the past 2 years alone just
210 as more than 100 companies are pursuing advanced nuclear
211 technologies, and the agency continues to oversee more than
212 90 nuclear reactors. Yes, we should remove unnecessary
213 barriers, support domestic enrichment capabilities, but it is
214 difficult to do so without the -- a strong nuclear workforce
215 and strong oversight and accountability.

216 Efficiency does not mean cutting corners, reform cannot
217 mean weakening safeguards, and speed cannot come at the
218 expense of transparency, independence, and the public trust.
219 So I hope my Republican colleagues will work with us to make
220 progress on building a 21st century grid, helping to connect
221 up these nuclear resources that are vital for the future,
222 particularly to permit and build new transmission lines and
223 support all forms of clean, affordable energy. We cannot
224 afford to be complacent as our neighbors back home face soul-
225 crushing energy costs and need our help now.

226 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back my time.

227 *Mr. Latta. Well, thank you very much. The gentlelady
228 yields back and the chair now recognizes the gentleman from
229 Kentucky, the chair of the full committee, for five minutes
230 for an opening statement.

231 *The Chair. Thank you. Good morning and thank you,
232 Chairman Latta, for holding this important markup to consider
233 bills related to spurring further investment in nuclear
234 energy.

235 I would also like to thank my good friend from New
236 Jersey, Ranking Member Pallone, for his and his staff's
237 collaboration on these bills to ensure the regulatory
238 framework for nuclear safety and security is up to date and
239 capable of meeting the demands of the expanding nuclear
240 industry.

241 This industry, from the fuels manufacturers and reactors
242 to operators and workers, will be essential for long-term
243 American technological leadership globally and for reliable
244 and abundant energy here at home. I have noted in recent
245 hearings that we must strive to return to pace -- to a pace
246 of nuclear expansion that surpasses what America achieved
247 over 30 years ago. In that period we demonstrated our
248 leadership on nuclear power and nuclear power production,
249 nuclear and operational safety, setting the standard for the
250 world. While American industry still sets the standard,
251 adversaries such as China are working hard to catch up.
252 Whether it is on nuclear technology or AI or other advanced
253 technologies, we can't let the licensing process itself be a
254 major impediment to the -- maintaining our edge.

255 The six bills today build upon bipartisan reforms we

256 started two years ago with the ADVANCE Act to improve nuclear
257 permitting to bring about benefits faster while still
258 maintaining safety. The central goal then and today is to
259 make sure the NRC licensing is efficient, predictable, and
260 timely. The bills before us today clarify pay authority,
261 improve transparency, and eliminate unnecessary Atomic Energy
262 Act requirements to ensure licensing runs more smoothly and
263 all the bills deserve strong bipartisan support.

264 While we have been -- while we have some ongoing
265 discussions about the details in a couple of the bills, I am
266 encouraged by the continued cooperation across from the aisle
267 -- across the aisle and our shared goals to get this right.
268 I appreciate the work that has gone into these bills today
269 already. I thank both of our staffs on both sides of the
270 aisle for all the hard work, and particularly Ranking Member
271 Castor and Chairman Latta for doing this.

272 I really appreciate your work. Thank you, and I yield
273 back.

274 *Mr. Latta. Thank you. The gentleman yields back and
275 the chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, the
276 ranking member of the full committee, for five minutes for an
277 opening statement.

278 *Mr. Pallone. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

279 Nuclear energy plays a critical part in delivering
280 carbon-free power in our nation's power grid. In an era of

281 increasing power demand, new nuclear facilities can provide
282 clean energy to the power grid around the clock.
283 Unfortunately, when President Trump took office he
284 immediately launched an attack against the Nuclear Regulatory
285 Commission, our nation's nuclear safety regulator, by
286 inappropriately letting unaccountable DOGE workers from the
287 Department of Energy to get involved in NRC business. The
288 attack continued a few weeks ago, with a Supreme Court
289 decision granting the President sweeping powers to fire our
290 nation's nuclear safety cops on the beat at any time for any
291 reason, and this poses a serious risk and it could imperil
292 the nuclear industry in our country.

293 At all three of our nuclear energy hearings this
294 Congress the subcommittee has heard testimony about how vital
295 it is that the NRC remain independent. We heard testimony
296 from the Secretary of Energy and the chairman of the NRC
297 itself that the NRC's independence is paramount. But
298 unfortunately, Trump and his accomplices on the Supreme Court
299 think they know better, and I just hope the rest of us don't
300 have to pay the price. These actions jeopardize both the
301 safety of our nation's nuclear industry and the public's
302 perception that the industry is safe. And if the public
303 loses confidence in nuclear power, then we will never build
304 more nuclear power in this nation. And it is that simple.

305 I made clear that my support for nuclear legislation is

306 contingent upon transparency and confidence in our nuclear
307 safety regulators. For the moment I am satisfied that the
308 inclusion of Ranking Member Castor's bill, the Department of
309 Energy Nuclear Transparency Act, combined with continued
310 efforts from NRC Chairman Nieh to improve transparency are
311 sufficient to help us move forward today. But I must
312 emphasize that these commitments to transparency must be an
313 ongoing process. And frankly, it is ridiculous that we had
314 to raise the alarm in the first place.

315 I also want to be clear. Even though the majority on
316 the Supreme Court may have blessed the illegal firing of NRC
317 commissioners, I certainly do not. If the Administration
318 attempts to fire or threatens to fire another NRC
319 commissioner, the Democratic support for nuclear legislation
320 will evaporate. We are not going to let Trump endanger the
321 safety of millions of Americans.

322 Now, turning to the specifics of the bills today, most
323 are bipartisan efforts to increase nuclear transparency and
324 improve the licensing process, and I look forward to
325 supporting them. But I do have concerns with H.R. 9613,
326 which, as currently drafted, would double down on the Trump
327 Administration's attacks on the NRC's Advisory Committee on
328 Reactor Safeguards. I do think there are ways to tweak the
329 bill to address my concerns, and I appreciate the Republican
330 majority's willingness to engage us on those concerns.

331 I also believe there are some changes that can be made
332 to H.R. 9612 to ensure that the bill is implemented as
333 intended, and I hope we can continue to have productive
334 conversations on these two bills -- have any action when we
335 go to full committee.

336 So thank you, Chairman Latta. I yield back the balance
337 of my time.

338 *Mr. Latta. Well, thank you very much. The gentleman
339 yields back and the chair calls up H.R. 3978.

340 I am sorry. The chair reminds members that, pursuant to
341 the committee rules, all members' opening statements will be
342 made part of the record. Are there any further opening
343 statements from any of the members?

344 Hearing none, the chair calls up H.R. 3978 and asks the
345 clerk to report.

346 *The Clerk. H.R. 3978, a bill to amend the definition
347 of production facility in the Atomic Energy Act.

348 Thank you. Without objection, the first reading of the
349 bill is dispensed with, and the bill will be open for
350 amendment at any point.

351 So ordered.

352 [The bill follows:]

353

354 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

355

356 *Mr. Latta. Does anyone seek recognition on the bill?
357 For what purpose does the gentleman from California's
358 50th district seek recognition?

359 *Mr. Peters. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last
360 word to speak in support of the bill.

361 *Mr. Latta. The gentleman is recognized for five
362 minutes to speak on the bill.

363 *Mr. Peters. Thank you. Clean base load nuclear energy
364 is and will continue to be a critical part of our energy
365 generation mix, especially as energy demand continues to
366 rise. Plans for more nuclear power plants across the country
367 to meet this demand is a worthy idea that this committee and
368 Congress should make a reality through a sound, durable
369 energy strategy.

370 One key aspect of that strategy which has consistently
371 been ignored is a solution to the question of nuclear waste,
372 specifically the long-term storage of spent nuclear fuel.
373 Whenever this committee talks about nuclear energy, I talk
374 about the first thing that my constituents think when they
375 hear nuclear: SONGS, or the San Onofre Nuclear Generating
376 Station. This decommissioned nuclear power plant is up the
377 coastline about 20 minutes outside my district in San Diego.
378 Right now we are on schedule to fully decommission the plant
379 by 2028. However, after the plant is demolished the spent
380 nuclear fuel will remain on the site in dry storage, close to

381 the ocean and population centers and a military center, and
382 people in San Diego are quite worried about it.

383 So I am encouraged to see the Department of Energy move
384 forward with their nuclear life cycle innovation campuses,
385 which is more of a consent-based siting process for spent
386 nuclear fuel, and I hope that works. But Congress must work
387 in parallel on a durable legislative path for interim and
388 long-term storage and utilization of nuclear waste. That
389 should include removing barriers to recycling and other
390 innovative uses for spent fuels. That is why the Nuclear
391 REFUEL Act is such a great first step, and I am glad the
392 committee is acting on it. Making it easier to recycle and
393 reuse spent fuel keeps them in reactors and away from
394 communities. It also keeps a reliable chain -- supply chain
395 of fuel, which is good for national security.

396 I want to thank Chairman Latta, Chairman Guthrie, and
397 Ranking Member Pallone and their staffs for working hard to
398 ensure the Nuclear REFUEL Act could be considered in advance
399 during today's markup.

400 While this bill is only one component of a larger, more
401 comprehensive solution to the storage of spent nuclear fuel,
402 I urge my colleagues to support it, as it gives us another
403 tool in our toolbox without sacrificing safety or oversight.

404 Thank you, and I yield back.

405 *Mr. Latta. Thank you. The gentleman yields back the

406 balance of his time. The chair now recognizes himself for
407 five minutes to speak on the bill.

408 First I want to thank my colleague from California's 5th
409 district for the hard work on this legislation.

410 H.R. 3975 amends the Atomic Energy Act by clarifying the
411 definition of a production facility to exclude spent fuel
412 reprocessing facilities, bringing them in line with the
413 licensing framework of other fuel cycle facilities.

414 A strong, robust domestic nuclear fuel cycle is
415 paramount to maintaining and growing nuclear capacity in this
416 country. The deployment of advanced reactors and the
417 operation of our existing fleet cannot be done without access
418 to an abundant, secure fuel supply. Efficient licensing of
419 reprocessing facilities, as this legislation ensures,
420 advances our policy to maximize access to the additional
421 energy available in spent nuclear fuel. The Nuclear REFUEL
422 Act supports this goal by clarifying that spent fuel
423 reprocessing facilities would be licensed under the same
424 framework as other fuel cycle facilities, rather than
425 production facilities which require a longer, two-step
426 process for licensing more appropriate -- which is more
427 appropriate for nuclear reactors.

428 Allowing for a more efficient and predictable licensing
429 pathway for reprocessing facility supports the pursuit of
430 this promising technology. A central theme of the

431 legislation in this markup is to remove unnecessary barriers
432 to licensing the technology we need for a strong, robust
433 nuclear sector. This bill helps ensure that industry has
434 efficient licensing paths to deploy spent fuel reprocessing,
435 while maintaining all necessary requirements to ensure
436 adequate protection to the public.

437 I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3978, and I
438 yield back the balance of my time. Are there other members
439 seeking recognition on the bill?

440 For what purpose does the gentlelady from California
441 seek recognition?

442 *Ms. Matsui. I move to strike the last word.

443 *Mr. Latta. The gentlelady is recognized for five
444 minutes to speak on the bill.

445 *Ms. Matsui. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move to strike
446 the last word and speak in support of this bill.

447 When it comes to nuclear energy, I think everyone on
448 this committee knows that my number-one priority is nuclear
449 waste. As a country we cannot continue to develop nuclear
450 power without a plan for the waste. It is not fair to
451 communicate -- communities like my district was left to deal
452 with the waste on our own for, like, 30 years, and who are
453 forced to repeatedly sue the Federal Government to cover the
454 costs of dealing with the waste.

455 I support the Nuclear REFUEL Act because recycling could

456 play an important role in reducing nuclear waste, and this
457 bill would make it easier to build a nuclear waste recycling
458 facility. But it remains to be seen whether recycling of
459 spent nuclear fuel will scale in the United States, and it
460 remains to be seen how much waste can realistically be
461 recycled. And even then, recycling won't fully eliminate the
462 waste problem; there will still be waste that needs to be
463 disposed of.

464 So I want to reiterate recycling cannot be another
465 excuse to kick the can down the road and avoid our
466 responsibility to authorize an effective Federal nuclear
467 waste program. I urge my colleagues to recognize this
468 fundamental problem and to work with me to advance bipartisan
469 legislation that would authorize a Federal nuclear waste
470 program.

471 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

472 *Mr. Latta. Thank you very much. The gentlelady yields
473 back. Are there any other members wishing to be recognized
474 on the bill?

475 Seeing none, are there any amendments to the bill?

476 The chair has an amendment at the desk, H.R. 3978-01,
477 and I offer that amendment.

478 If you would, report the amendment.

479 *The Clerk. Amendment to H.R. 3978 offered by Mr.
480 Latta. Section 2 is amended to read as followed. Section

481 2 --

482 *Mr. Latta. Without objection, the reading of the
483 amendment is dispensed with.

484 [The amendment of Mr. Latta follows:]

485

486 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

487

488 *Mr. Latta. And I will recognize myself for five
489 minutes in support of the amendment.

490 This amendment reflects suggested clarifications
491 provided by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and
492 stakeholders who are working to develop reprocessing and
493 extract important isotopes from the reprocessing. As
494 drafted, H.R. 3978 may be interpreted to limit the extraction
495 of certain important isotopes critical to American space
496 exploration and other security missions. The amendment
497 addresses this by revising the definition to make clear spent
498 fuel reprocessing under this law will apply to the processes
499 that isolate plutonium for non-proliferation purposes.

500 The amendment also clarifies that Congress does not
501 intend to change any of the existing requirements pertaining
502 to the export of spent fuel processing -- reprocessing
503 technologies. We must make maximum use of our nuclear fuel
504 resources, including the resources in spent fuel and license
505 the necessary reprocessing facilities efficiently, as we do
506 with other fuel cycle facilities.

507 The amendment helps perfect the bill, and I urge support
508 for the amendment and support for H.R. 3978, the REFUEL Act.

509 Are there any members wishing recognition on the
510 amendment?

511 Is there any further discussion on the amendment?

512 If there is no further discussion on the amendment, the

513 vote occurs on the amendment.

514 All those in favor shall signify by saying aye.

515 All those opposed, nay.

516 The ayes have it, and the amendment is agreed to. Are
517 there any other amendments on the bill?

518 Hearing none, the question now occurs on adopting H.R.
519 3978, as amended.

520 All those in favor shall signify by saying aye.

521 Those opposed, nay.

522 The ayes have it and the bill is adopted. The bill, as
523 amended, is adopted to the full committee.

524 The chair calls up H.R. 9612 and asks the clerk to
525 report.

526 *The Clerk. H.R. 9612, a bill to amend the Atomic
527 Energy Act of 1954 to update the licensing procedures --

528 *Mr. Latta. Without objection, the first reading of the
529 bill is dispensed with, and the bill will be open for
530 amendment at any point.

531 So ordered.

532 [The bill follows:]

533

534 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

535

536 *Mr. Latta. Does any member seek recognition on the
537 bill?

538 For what purpose does the gentleman from South
539 Carolina's 7th district seek recognition?

540 *Mr. Fry. Permission to speak on the legislation, Mr.
541 Chair.

542 *Mr. Latta. The gentleman is recognized for five
543 minutes to speak on the bill.

544 *Mr. Fry. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I would like to
545 speak in favor of H.R. 9612, the American Enrichment
546 Deployment Act, which I introduce along with Ms. Schrier and
547 Mrs. Houchin.

548 This bill would amend the Atomic Energy Act to remove
549 unnecessary provisions for licensing enrichment facilities so
550 that the licensing aligns with the more efficient framework
551 for other nuclear fuel cycle facilities, namely for uranium
552 conversion and fuel fabrication. All of these fuel cycle
553 facilities are more akin to industrial chemical facilities
554 than to nuclear reactors, and therefore are subject to an
555 efficient, one-step licensing process for the possession and
556 use of the special nuclear material that NRC regulates.

557 This bill makes clear, for example, that construction of
558 enrichment facilities would be allowed prior to licensing
559 under the same terms and conditions already applicable to
560 other types of fuel cycle facilities. There would be no

561 impact on safety assessments, no impact on environmental
562 assessments required under NEPA, nor on any of the
563 requirements for safeguards and security to meet the relevant
564 provisions of the Atomic Energy Act. NRC retains all of its
565 authorities to regulate construction, conduct inspections,
566 and deny applications that do not meet its requirements, and
567 the amendment would not deprive any person whose interests
568 are affected by the licensing -- the right to request a
569 hearing.

570 If we are going to build out our nuclear industry, we
571 need nuclear fuel for that industry and we need a secure,
572 abundant supply of that fuel. In the 118th Congress, with
573 strong bipartisan support, we enacted laws that seek to
574 secure our fuel supplies and to end our reliance on
575 enrichment uranium from Russia which reached almost a quarter
576 of all fuels used in reactors in recent years. That Russian
577 reliance is coming to an end, and fast, by the end of 2027.
578 At the same time, market demand is driving American
579 enrichment expansion with existing facilities expanding and
580 at least two new facilities planned to be constructed and
581 licensed.

582 In my state of South Carolina, for example, where
583 nuclear power makes up 59 percent of our power, we are
584 planning a major expansion to meet our power demands for
585 industry and our residents. This American enrichment

586 expansion is essential for our nuclear build-out, and this
587 bill helps pave the way for safe, secure, and more abundant
588 enrichment.

589 I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 9612, and I yield
590 back.

591 *Mr. Latta. Thank you. The gentleman yields back. And
592 for what purpose does the gentlelady from Washington's 8th
593 district seek recognition?

594 *Ms. Schrier. I move to strike the last word.

595 *Mr. Latta. The gentlelady is recognized for five
596 minutes to speak on the bill.

597 *Ms. Schrier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

598 As we work to expand our nation's build-out of nuclear
599 power, we need a steep increase in the production of nuclear
600 fuel right here in this country. Right now we don't have
601 enough enrichment capacity. Adversaries like Russia own
602 nearly half of the world's uranium enrichment capabilities.
603 And meanwhile, the U.S. just has just one operating
604 enrichment plant. And with the ban on Russian uranium
605 imports that this committee enacted, we need our own domestic
606 fuel supply chain, especially for HALEU.

607 That is why I have joined Congressman Fry to introduce
608 the American Enrichment Deployment Act that aims to
609 streamline the licensing process for enrichment facilities
610 while preserving NRC's safety mission. And a big piece of

611 that is giving applicants of uranium enrichment facilities
612 the same option to start at-risk construction that applicants
613 of other fuel cycle facilities already utilize. Still more
614 needs to be done to ensure congressional intent is properly
615 captured in this bill, that we ensure safety, and I look
616 forward to working with Representative Fry and this committee
617 to make that happen.

618 For our own national security and our energy supply and
619 imminent need to fuel our advanced reactors, let's make sure
620 we get this done. I appreciate Chair Guthrie and Ranking
621 Member Pallone's continued efforts here.

622 Thank you, and I yield back.

623 *Mr. Latta. Thank you very much. The gentlelady yields
624 back. Are there other members of the subcommittee seeking
625 recognition on the bill?

626 Seeing none, are there any amendments to the bill?

627 If there is no further discussion on the bill, the vote
628 occurs and all those in favor signify by saying aye.

629 Those opposed, nay.

630 The ayes have it. The bill is adopted and forwarded to
631 the full committee.

632 The chair calls up 5549 and asks the clerk to report.

633 *The Clerk. H.R. 5549, a bill to amend the Atomic
634 Energy Act of 1954 --

635 *Mr. Latta. Without objection, the first reading of the

636 bill is dispensed with, and the bill will be open for
637 amendment at any point.

638 So ordered.

639 [The bill follows:]

640

641 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

642

643 *Mr. Latta. Are there any members seeking recognition
644 on the bill?

645 For what purpose does the gentleman from Ohio's 12th
646 district seek recognition?

647 *Mr. Balderson. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I would like
648 to strike the last word and speak in support of the bill.

649 *Mr. Latta. The gentleman is recognized for five
650 minutes to speak on the bill.

651 *Mr. Balderson. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.
652 Thank you for holding this markup today and, Mr. Chairman,
653 for including the Efficient Nuclear Licensing Hearings Act
654 introduced by my friend, Virginian, Mr. Griffith -- from
655 Virginia, Mr. Griffith -- I apologize -- along with Ms.
656 Schrier and Mr. Veasey.

657 This bill amends the Atomic Energy Act to remove the
658 requirement for the NRC to expend resources on unnecessary
659 hearings. Under the current law the NRC must hold mandatory
660 uncontested hearings on applications to the NRC for
661 construction permits, operating licenses, and licenses to
662 possess or use special nuclear material. NRC staff and
663 commissioners already offer more than 20 opportunities for
664 the public and affected parties to be heard in the licensing
665 process for new reactors. Removing this mandatory hearing
666 would in no way impact the right of anybody whose interests
667 are affected by the licensing to request a hearing on

668 specific matters.

669 The bill also provides flexibility to the NRC to use
670 less formal procedures, if appropriate, for hearings that
671 already have an ample record which streamlines the process
672 for staff, petitioners, and licensees.

673 I also think it is important to note this bill does not
674 weaken the NRC safety standards or limit public participation
675 for contested issues. Rather, the bill ensures the
676 Commission's staff is able to focus on ensuring nuclear
677 facilities meet safety and security requirements.

678 Our hearing record developed over the last two
679 Congresses shows that removal of this requirement and
680 modernizing the hearing process will remove unnecessary
681 burdens while ensuring safety and promoting public
682 participation. This is a practical and long-overdue reform.
683 I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this bill.

684 And I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

685 *Mr. Latta. Thank you very much. The gentleman yields
686 back. The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from
687 Washington's 8th district. For what purpose does the
688 gentlelady seek recognition?

689 *Ms. Schrier. I move to strike the last word.

690 *Mr. Latta. The gentlelady is recognized for five
691 minutes to speak on the bill.

692 *Ms. Schrier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am proud to

693 co-lead the Efficient Nuclear Licensing Hearings Act with
694 Congressman Griffith, a bipartisan bill that cuts red tape,
695 lowers energy costs, and brings clean energy onto the grid
696 faster.

697 Even when no one is even contesting a project, nuclear
698 regulators are still required to hold mandatory hearings that
699 take away thousands of staff hours and increased costs when
700 that time could be so much better spent on contested project
701 applications and critical environmental review. Mandatory
702 uncontested hearings have already slowed down the licensing
703 of three advanced reactors where there is absolutely zero
704 opposition. Three more have submitted license applications
705 and will still need a hearing, again, even if there is no
706 objection to the project.

707 My bill with Representative Griffith solves this issue
708 by only requiring a hearing when the issue is contested so
709 that our regulators are most effectively serving their safety
710 mission to protect public health and safety. This is a
711 pragmatic move, and it shifts our regulators' focus to the
712 issues that matter more and removes an outdated, obsolete
713 procedural process. I urge this committee to vote yes.

714 And I yield back.

715 *Mr. Latta. Thank you. The gentlelady yields back.
716 Are there other members seeking recognition on the bill?

717 Seeing none, are there any amendments to the bill?

718 Seeing none, the question now occurs on adopting H.R.
719 5549.

720 All those in favor shall signify by saying aye.

721 Those opposed, nay.

722 The ayes have it, and the bill is adopted and forwarded
723 to the full committee.

724 The chair calls up H.R. 9613 and asks the clerk to
725 report.

726 *The Clerk. H.R. 9613, a bill to update the role of the
727 Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards and the licensing
728 and oversight --

729 *Mr. Latta. Without objection, the first reading of the
730 bill is dispensed with, and the bill will be open for
731 amendment at any point.

732 So ordered.

733 [The bill follows:]

734

735 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

736

737 *Mr. Latta. Are there any members seeking recognition
738 on the bill?

739 For what purpose does the gentlelady from Tennessee's
740 1st district seek recognition?

741 *Mrs. Harshbarger. Chairman, I would like to speak on
742 my bill, H.R. 9613.

743 *Mr. Latta. The gentlelady is recognized for five
744 minutes to speak on the bill.

745 *Mrs. Harshbarger. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would
746 like to speak on the bill 9613, the Nuclear Advisory
747 Committee Reform Act.

748 The Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards is an
749 important independent advisor to the NRC for reactor
750 licensing, and the committee has a long history of assisting
751 Nuclear Regulatory Commission decisions on unique and
752 important safety and technical issues, issues that arise
753 particularly with new designs and technologies. And Congress
754 established the committee in law in the 1950s to assist the
755 Commission on the various safety-significant issues
756 confronting the Commission when it was licensing the first
757 generation of nuclear reactors. Those reactors and
758 technologies are now well characterized and well understood.

759 And as we have heard in testimony during the legislative
760 hearing, the NRC technical staff is well equipped to deal
761 with licensing issues, with a record of some 4,500 years of

762 operational experience of the existing fleet to draw from.
763 However, as we all know, there is a new wave of technologies
764 on the horizon which would still benefit from ACRS
765 independent review and advice.

766 H.R. 9613 preserves the ACRS's role and focuses its work
767 on where it will provide greatest value for the NRC and the
768 public. It would amend the Atomic Energy Act to direct that
769 ACRS focus on issues that are directly related to reactor
770 design, safety, significant and novel, and have not been
771 previously acted upon by the committee. The bill would
772 update term requirements and require diverse background and
773 expertise relevant to the NRC's mission, and the bill would
774 update when the Commission may direct ACRS to take action.

775 I understand the other side of the aisle has some
776 questions relating to NRC's role and ACRS reviews, and I will
777 commit to work with my colleagues to see if we can address
778 concerns before the full committee. This bill is important
779 to align the mission of this important committee with the
780 mission of the NRC, as we outlined in the ADVANCE Act, and I
781 look forward to working to move this bill and urge my
782 colleagues to support it today.

783 And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

784 *Mr. Latta. Thank you. The gentlelady yields back.
785 Are there other members seeking recognition?

786 For what purpose the ranking member of the subcommittee

787 seek recognition?

788 *Ms. Castor. I move to strike the last word.

789 *Mr. Latta. The gentlelady is recognized for five
790 minutes to speak on the bill.

791 *Ms. Castor. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to take
792 this opportunity to comment on a potential path forward for
793 this bill, and I appreciate the dedication of many members on
794 both sides of the aisle to removing unnecessary barriers to
795 energy development in America, and I think there is a way to
796 focus this bill on that, but we are not quite there yet.

797 The Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, or ACRS,
798 dates back to 1953, and the Congress codified its existence
799 in 1957. For over 70 years it has provided the Nuclear
800 Regulatory Commission and its predecessor, the Atomic Energy
801 Commission, valuable technical expertise and advice on
802 proposed rules and nuclear reactors. Especially as the NRC's
803 commissioners themselves have become less technical and more
804 policy-focused and the number and diversity of proposed
805 nuclear reactors soars, it is vital that we do not limit the
806 NRC's ability to receive impartial technical advice.

807 That isn't to say that there are not ways that the
808 ACRS's operations can be improved. In the last year the ACRS
809 has focused more on unique, novel, and noteworthy issues,
810 dedicating its valuable time to truly thorny technical
811 problems rather than well-understood problems. I absolutely

812 think we should codify that focus, and I want to compliment
813 Representative Harshbarger and her team for including that in
814 the bill.

815 However, the bill would also restrict the ACRS to
816 examining issues only when it is explicitly asked by the NRC,
817 and I think that is a mistake. While the ACRS does not need
818 to examine every issue that comes before the Commission,
819 especially proposals for reactors that are not unique, novel,
820 or noteworthy, it does need to be able to speak up when it
821 thinks there is an issue worth highlighting. The ACRS is not
822 comprised of bureaucrats. These are genuine nuclear experts
823 taking time to serve their country by ensuring that nuclear
824 energy is safe energy. While we want them to be efficient in
825 their work, I cannot support any proposal that would silence
826 them, especially in the wake of last month's Supreme Court
827 ruling ending the political independence of commissions like
828 the NRC.

829 I appreciate the chairman's and the professional staff
830 -- you have indicated you are willing to work with us on
831 these issues as we advance this bill to the full committee.
832 If we can find a path forward, then I think this bill can be
833 a complement to the other bipartisan proposals that we are
834 moving forward today. If not, it will be a missed
835 opportunity.

836 So with that I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

837 *Mr. Latta. Well, thank you. The gentlelady yields
838 back. For what -- are there other members seeking
839 recognition?

840 For what purpose does the gentleman from Texas's 12th
841 district seek recognition?

842 *Mr. Goldman. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last
843 word and speak in favor of the bill.

844 *Mr. Latta. The gentleman is recognized for five
845 minutes to speak on the bill.

846 *Mr. Goldman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am in support
847 of this piece of legislation.

848 Texas is in the middle of the biggest energy build-out
849 in the country. Our grid operator is projecting demand
850 growth that will require every resource we can to bring
851 online, including next-generation nuclear. Companies are
852 looking hard at Texas because our state is saying yes to new
853 reactors, but Federal licensing timelines are still designed
854 for a different era.

855 The Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards plays an
856 important role. No one is questioning that reactor safety
857 review matters. But when a mandated committee reviews every
858 license application from scratch with no requirement to focus
859 on what is actually novel or safety significant, you get
860 duplication. The same issue is examined twice by two
861 different arms of the same agency at the taxpayer's expense.

862 I support this bill because it keeps ACRS doing what
863 only ACRS can do: independent technical review of novel
864 safety significant issues without relegating settled ground.
865 That is not weakening safety oversight; that is improving
866 efficiency.

867 I thank my friend from Tennessee for her leadership on
868 this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and
869 I would yield back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

870 *Mr. Latta. Well, thank you very much. The gentleman
871 yields back. Are there others wishing to speak on the bill?

872 For what purpose does the gentlelady from New York's
873 14th district seek recognition?

874 *Ms. Ocasio-Cortez. I move to strike the last word.

875 *Mr. Latta. The gentlelady is recognized for five
876 minutes to speak on the bill.

877 *Ms. Ocasio-Cortez. Yes, I would like to associate
878 myself with the comments of the ranking member and the
879 concerns that she has raised.

880 The Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, or ACRS,
881 is our independent body of technical experts that include
882 physicists, engineers, and safety specialists. And their
883 sole job is to review nuclear reactor license applications
884 and tell the public what they found. And, you know, I
885 absolutely share in the sentiment in that we want to reduce
886 bureaucracy and we want to reduce unnecessary obstacles

887 between application and bringing energy online. However, the
888 ranking member's point that this would remove the ability to
889 approve in -- as the only independent technical check between
890 a reactor application and an approval. And under this bill,
891 it -- this independent check only happens when it is being
892 requested by the NRC.

893 Right now the United States is preparing to license a
894 new generation of advanced reactors that have never been
895 built before. They have never been operated at commercial
896 scale, and their risks are not fully understood. And this is
897 exactly when independent scrutiny matters the most. In fact,
898 we have two real-life examples.

899 During the NuScale Small Modular Reactor review, the NRC
900 staff accepted the company's safety analysis. The NRC did.
901 And the ACRS, when they conducted their own independent
902 review, they found that in an emergency the water designed to
903 cool the nuclear reactor core could lose the one ingredient
904 keeping the reactor under control, creating conditions that
905 could lead to a meltdown. They identified this issue, and
906 NuScale was then required to submit design modifications in
907 response. Under this bill and in this kind of circumstance,
908 if ACRS were not specifically asked after NRC had accepted,
909 we could have had an oversight on this detail.

910 And just last year, during the review of the Kairos
911 Power's Hermes 2, a first-of-a-kind reactor that had never

912 been built or operated anywhere, the ACRS also identified
913 that the chemical process used to prevent the salt from
914 corroding the reactor's internal components could itself
915 cause a different form of degradation that had not yet been
916 fully understood.

917 These are not isolated incidents, and they highlight the
918 importance of the ACRS's work. And I don't think that we
919 should be shifting to a model where the ACRS only has an
920 ability to say something if the NRC asks them to. That --
921 they are what mandatory independent review is designed to
922 catch, and this is how our system is working.

923 Last May President Trump signed an executive order that
924 severely limited the ACRS's activities, and this bill takes
925 that further. It completely removes ACRS's discretion to
926 review applications and permanently writes that into law.

927 And so, you know, I think that there are other areas of
928 this bill where there has been a lot of progress that is
929 made. I would urge the committee to work on addressing these
930 concerns before legislation moves to the full committee.
931 Thank you.

932 *Mr. Latta. Well, thank you very much. The gentlelady
933 yields back. Are there other members seeking recognition to
934 speak on the bill?

935 Seeing none, are there any amendments to the bill?

936 Hearing none, the question now occurs on adopting H.R.

937 9613.

938 All those in favor shall signify by saying aye.

939 Those opposed, nay.

940 The ayes have it. The bill is adopted and forwarded to
941 the full committee.

942 The chair calls up H.R. 9614 and asks the clerk to
943 report.

944 *The Clerk. H.R. 9614, a bill to amend the Atomic
945 Energy Act of 1954 to provide compensation --

946 *Mr. Latta. And without objection, the first reading of
947 the bill is dispensed with, and the bill will be open for
948 amendment at any point.

949 So ordered.

950 [The bill follows:]

951

952 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

953

954 *Mr. Latta. Are there any members seeking recognition
955 on the bill?

956 For what purpose does the gentleman from New Jersey's
957 8th district seek recognition?

958 *Mr. Menendez. I move to strike the last word and speak
959 in support of the bill.

960 *Mr. Latta. The gentleman is recognized for five
961 minutes to speak on the bill.

962 *Mr. Menendez. Thank you, Chairman. I am grateful that
963 the committee is marking up my bill, H.R. 9614, the NRC Staff
964 Pay Alignment Act.

965 This bill would increase the pay of Senior Executive
966 Service, or SES, positions at the Nuclear Regulatory
967 Commission to help the Commission recruit and retain key
968 staff. This effort builds on the ADVANCE Act, which
969 increased pay for NRC staffers who are not part of the SES.

970 I want to especially thank Congresswoman DeGette, who
971 authored those ADVANCE Act provisions, for laying the
972 groundwork that led to this bill.

973 Hiring and retaining safety experts at the NRC is
974 essential to keeping our communities safe, especially as
975 states, tech companies, and the Trump Administration are all
976 turning toward nuclear energy to meet growing energy demands.
977 But since January 2025, over 400 career staff have left the
978 NRC, with teams that handle safety experiencing the most

979 significant staff reductions. This is very alarming,
980 especially given the unique safety risks that nuclear
981 reactors can have on our communities.

982 Many communities across the country have serious
983 concerns with nuclear reactors being built or reactivated in
984 their backyard, and it is easy to understand why. So it is
985 important that we build trust with communities who are
986 hosting nuclear facilities. That trust is built through
987 institutions that are responsible for ensuring reactors meet
988 the highest standards of safety imaginable. And we need
989 those institutions such as the NRC to be fully staffed with
990 the top experts in nuclear safety. This bill helps us do
991 just that.

992 But I think it is important to take a moment to address
993 some concerning things that have happened at the NRC over the
994 past 19 months. Steve Cohen, who is leading the DOGE charge
995 at NRC said that the goal was to make the agency a "rubber
996 stamp" for the Trump Administration, dismiss safety concerns
997 raised by NRC staff. Career NRC lawyers working on key cases
998 have left the NRC. And in April the Democratic commissioners
999 testified before this very committee that they were concerned
1000 about being fired for not approving a nuclear reactor that
1001 the Trump Administration wants. And these attacks are
1002 actively putting our communities at risk.

1003 This bill can help the Federal Government compete with

1004 the private industry and incentivize its top experts to stay
1005 at the Commission, and it is a key piece towards rebuilding
1006 trust with our communities by giving the Commission a tool to
1007 hire and retain the best safety experts.

1008 I urge my colleagues to support the bill and I yield
1009 back.

1010 *Mr. Latta. Thank you. The gentleman yields back and
1011 the chair now recognizes himself for five minutes to speak on
1012 the bill -- as I said, speak on the legislation.

1013 This -- the level of expertise demanded by the positions
1014 at the NRC require highly qualified candidates, candidates
1015 which are also desirable for the private sector, creating
1016 retention pressures. The special workforce and pay authority
1017 this committee established for the NRC in the ADVANCE act
1018 sought to help attract and preserve exceptional employees at
1019 the NRC.

1020 H.R. 9614 fixes an issue we inadvertently created with
1021 our incentive pay provisions in the ADVANCE Act. Those
1022 provisions left out career Senior Executive Service
1023 employees, SES, who typically are managers. This created
1024 potential issues of pay alignments for exceptional managers
1025 that may undermine effective management and retention.

1026 It is important for quality personnel at the NRC to
1027 ensure efficient licensing and oversight, especially during
1028 this time of industrial growth, and that requires good

1029 management. H.R. 9614 authorizes the chairman of the NRC to
1030 modestly increase the compensation rate of Senior Executive
1031 Service employees at NRC. This authority to modestly
1032 increase the rate of compensation for certain employees will
1033 help the NRC maintain a strong, specialized workforce, as
1034 well as the quality management necessary to carry out the
1035 NRC's mission.

1036 I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and I
1037 yield back the balance of my time. Are there other members
1038 seeking recognition?

1039 For what purpose does the gentlelady from Virginia's
1040 14th district seek recognition?

1041 *Ms. McClellan. Speaking to the bill.

1042 *Mr. Latta. The gentlelady is recognized for five
1043 minutes to speak on the bill.

1044 *Ms. McClellan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1045 I support this important legislation from Representative
1046 Menendez to bring pay for NRC employees in line with their
1047 private-sector counterparts. We must take concrete steps to
1048 retain the crucial expertise needed to properly regulate and
1049 oversee nuclear safety in this country. And to that extent I
1050 also implore my colleagues to push back on the harmful
1051 actions taken by the Trump Administration to push out
1052 talented and knowledgeable NRC employees and undermine the
1053 Commission's independence. This is particularly important in

1054 light of the Supreme Court's ruling in Trump versus Slaughter
1055 that allowed the President to fire the heads of independent
1056 agency -- regulatory agencies like the NRC.

1057 We have talked at length in this committee about the
1058 inextricable link between the NRC's independence and the
1059 Commission's ability to provide consistent and expert-driven
1060 oversight. I urge my colleagues to work in a bipartisan
1061 manner to safeguard the independence of the NRC to ensure
1062 that we do everything that we can to retain the necessary
1063 expertise to keep this growing industry operating in a safe
1064 and ethical manner forward. This legislation is an important
1065 first step. It cannot be the last.

1066 I yield back.

1067 *Mr. Latta. Thank you. The gentlelady yields back. Is
1068 there any further discussion on the legislation?

1069 Are there any amendments to the bill?

1070 Seeing none, the question now occurs on adopting H.R.
1071 9614.

1072 All those in favor shall signify by saying aye.

1073 Those opposed, nay.

1074 The ayes have it, and the bill is adopted and forwarded
1075 to the full committee.

1076 The chair calls up H.R. 9084 and asks the clerk to
1077 report.

1078 *The Clerk. H.R. 9084, a bill to increase transparency

1079 relating to the Department of --

1080 *Mr. Latta. Without objection, the first reading of the
1081 bill is dispensed with, and the bill will be open for
1082 amendment at any point.

1083 So ordered.

1084 [The bill follows:]

1085

1086 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

1087

1088 *Mr. Latta. Does any member seek recognition on the
1089 bill?

1090 For what purpose does the gentlelady from Florida, the
1091 ranking member of the Subcommittee --

1092 *Ms. Castor. I move to strike the last word to speak in
1093 favor of the bill.

1094 *Mr. Latta. The gentlelady is recognized for five
1095 minutes to speak on the bill.

1096 *Ms. Castor. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1097 The Department of Energy is crucial to advancing
1098 American leadership in nuclear energy. Under the Atomic
1099 Energy Act Congress gave DoE the authority to approve reactor
1100 authorizations for research purposes. And as I have pointed
1101 out many times across the past year, this is separate from
1102 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's approval process for a
1103 new reactor -- new reactor designs for commercial use.

1104 The DoE's authority does not in any way whatsoever
1105 replace the NRC's approval process. Yet over the past year
1106 DoE has developed new authorization processes for research
1107 and demonstration reactors outside of the typical NRC
1108 licensing process, and Secretary Wright has provided very
1109 little information about how DoE will preserve safety and
1110 transparency in this fast-tracked process. And this should
1111 be concerning to every member of this committee. We need to
1112 work together on this to make sure that everything is

1113 operating with the highest safety standards and transparency
1114 protocols.

1115 If we want modern nuclear energy to succeed in the
1116 United States, we must maintain the public trust in the
1117 industry. Congress and the American people should have full
1118 transparency into what the Department of Energy is doing. So
1119 my bill, the Department of Energy Nuclear Transparency Act,
1120 would provide congressional oversight over these new DoE
1121 fast-track processes, will promote transparent safety
1122 standards, and boost public confidence in the industry.

1123 If done correctly with the right policy support, nuclear
1124 energy can safely power the U.S. economy and lower costs for
1125 our neighbors back home. But we have work to do to -- as we
1126 move this bill forward, Mr. Chairman.

1127 And I want to thank everyone for including -- my
1128 colleague for including an amendment including some technical
1129 changes here. And I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman,
1130 Chairman Guthrie, and Chairman Pallone, and the professional
1131 staff on your willingness to work on this in a bipartisan
1132 manner. I hope we can make improvements to the bill and move
1133 it to the full committee.

1134 And I will yield back.

1135 *Mr. Latta. Thank you. The gentlelady yields back.
1136 Are there other members wishing to speak on the bill?

1137 Hearing none, are there any amendments?

1138 For what purpose does the gentlelady from Iowa's 1st
1139 district seek recognition?

1140 *Mrs. Miller-Meeks. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment
1141 at the desk.

1142 *Mr. Latta. The clerk will report the amendment.

1143 *The Clerk. Amendment to H.R. 9084 offered by Mrs.
1144 Miller-Meeks from -- strike 24 hours each --

1145 *Mr. Latta. Without objection, the reading of the
1146 amendment is dispensed with.

1147 [The amendment of Mrs. Miller-Meeks follows:]

1148

1149 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

1150

1151 *Mr. Latta. And the gentlelady is recognized for five
1152 minutes in support of her amendment.

1153 *Mrs. Miller-Meeks. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like
1154 to speak in favor of the amendment to H.R. 9084, the
1155 Department of Energy Nuclear Transparency Act.

1156 This amendment reflects suggested clarifications
1157 provided by both the Department of Energy's technical
1158 assistance and by testimony in our legislative hearing. This
1159 amendment adds to the information that may be withheld from
1160 disclosure to include classified and otherwise security-
1161 sensitive information, information that otherwise would be
1162 protected from disclosure under FOIA security exemptions.

1163 This amendment also adds additional time to comply with
1164 public reporting, consistent with practical suggestions
1165 provided in the legislative hearing. This amendment improves
1166 the bill.

1167 The Department of Energy is very active on nuclear
1168 regulatory matters, and it makes practical sense for the
1169 public and this committee to be timely informed of its
1170 activities.

1171 I urge support for this amendment and the support for
1172 the underlying bill, as amended.

1173 I yield back.

1174 *Mr. Latta. Thank you. Is there any other discussion
1175 on the amendment?

1176 Hearing no discussion on the amendment, the -- all those
1177 in favor will signify by saying aye.

1178 All opposed, nay.

1179 The ayes have it and the amendment is agreed to.

1180 Are there any other amendments to the bill?

1181 Hearing none, the question now occurs on adopting H.R.
1182 9084, as amended.

1183 All those in favor shall signify by saying aye.

1184 Those opposed, nay.

1185 The ayes have it and the bill, as adopted -- or is
1186 amended is adopted and forwarded the full committee.

1187 Without objection, staff is authorized to make technical
1188 and conforming changes to the legislation approved by the
1189 subcommittee today.

1190 So ordered.

1191 Without objection, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

1192 [Whereupon, at 11:14 a.m., the subcommittee was
1193 adjourned.]