

**Chairman Robert Latta Opening Statement
Subcommittee on Energy Hearing
“Nuclear Spent Fuel Policy: Examining Nuclear Lifecycle Innovation
Campuses”
Tuesday, September 15, 2026**

As prepared for delivery

Today the Energy Subcommittee will examine the Department of Energy’s work to develop what are called Nuclear Lifecycle Innovation Campuses.

These campuses represent a new and fresh effort by DOE and the Administration to [quote] “transform the nuclear fuel cycle.”

The program intends to support the nation’s nuclear policy ambitions as well as to begin to address the federal government’s statutory responsibility for disposal of nuclear waste.

This involves taking spent fuel from reactors around the nation to a state that volunteers to host the campus, where the fuel can be stored, recycled, and related waste disposed.

When it comes to increasing reprocessing, my view is: it is about time. Our policy should be to use our technological abilities to take fuller advantage of the remaining usefulness of

spent fuel—and this, in turn, reduces the waste that must be placed in a permanent repository.

Maximizing the remaining energy and other useful isotopes from spent fuel presents an attractive financial incentive for taking a more wholistic look at the full fuel cycle.

This explains why six states so far are stepping up to negotiate how to develop, in partnership with DOE, lifecycle innovation campuses.

And, as we will hear this morning, it may well offer a workable path for updating our nuclear waste policy.

But of course, there is a long way to go to develop durable state agreements—and durability is key.

The idea of consolidating spent fuel from sites under a federal program with voluntary host states is not a new one.

Congress authorized a nuclear waste negotiator to set up something like that in the early 1990s. For various reasons, that did not work out—as have other efforts with respect to attracting durable state support.

What must be done differently this time around?

There are also commercial and economic realities when it comes to our fuel cycle that factor into what may eventually develop.

This hearing will help us identify what Congress must do to enable continued work on these campuses, given their potential.

Our focus should be on policies that complement existing law—and the designated federal disposal site at Yucca Mountain—and protect the interests of ratepayers and taxpayers under that law. This means not rushing to restart fees on nuclear power generation or irresponsibly raiding the nuclear waste fund.

We should not forget that our bi-partisan legislative work in 2018 provided substantial changes to the law that would have incentivized completion of the Yucca license, enhanced host state benefits, and accelerated the type of program envisioned in the current proposal.

Those reforms passed the House by a vote of 340-72. Unfortunately, politics obstructed the potential for the reforms.

Perhaps with tremendous new support of nuclear in recent years means we're in a different place today.

We will take testimony from two panels.

On the first panel, we will hear from the Department of Energy. Assistant Secretary of Energy Ted Garrish, who heads the Office of Nuclear Energy and can explain the program, state interactions, and what Congress may do to help enable its progress forward.

Our second panel will provide perspective from key stakeholders.

We will hear from Stacy Paradis, an Illinois public utility commissioner speaking on behalf of NARUC. Electric ratepayers, under the law, are responsible for paying for the ultimate disposal of nuclear waste and she can speak to the importance of protecting ratepayer funding and the nuclear waste fund.

Maria Korsnick will provide the perspective of the Nuclear Energy Institute on the fuel cycle, and on the policies surrounding storage and disposition of spent nuclear fuel.

Jared des Rosiers (day-roe-sheer), will speak on behalf of the Decommissioned Plants Coalition, which represents closed nuclear plants that continue to store spent fuel.

And, finally, Greg White, also a former state utility commissioner, will provide the perspective of the Nuclear Waste

Strategy Coalition, which represents a range of stakeholders that seek to get our nuclear waste policy back on track.

We welcome the witnesses and I yield back the balance of my time.

###