



COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRATS
ENERGY & COMMERCE
RANKING MEMBER FRANK PALLONE, JR.

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**Statement of Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr., submitted for the record
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy
Hearing on “The Nuclear Waste Fund: Budgetary, Funding and Scoring Issues”**

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Safe disposal of spent fuel from our nation’s nuclear reactors is an important issue in the realm of our country’s energy future. We must find a long term solution to the issue of nuclear waste and how to finance its safe storage.

Today’s hearing focuses on the Nuclear Waste Fund and its budgetary, funding and scoring issues. Although the fund was intended to be “off budget,” appropriations from the fund have scored as expenditures and lead to insufficient funds being made available to meet the needs of the program. As our country pursues interim storage solutions – and ultimately a permanent repository for spent nuclear fuel – it is critical that we ensure the funds necessary to safely transport and store this material are available. And we must work to identify steps we can take now to set the stage for real reform on permanent disposal in the future, regardless of where the disposal facility ends up being sited.

Whenever we have a discussion about the Nuclear Waste Fund and the safe disposal of spent nuclear fuel, it is also critical for us to consider ratepayers because they have paid billions of dollars into the fund and received very little in return. We also need to consider taxpayers who now find themselves paying for the failures of the program. We need to be focusing on efforts that can be enacted into law and that will move us forward over the next few years.

I am very interested in hearing from our witnesses today about the challenges and state of play regarding the Nuclear Waste Fund and our efforts to safely store spent nuclear fuel.

Thank you for holding this hearing, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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