

OPENING STATEMENT
Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Subcommittee on Energy
“Advancing Nuclear Energy: Powering the Future”
September 27, 2018

Good morning and thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing on the development of advanced nuclear energy technologies and the implementation of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act. This bill, which I was very pleased to co-sponsor, passed both the House and Senate with strong bipartisan support, and I hope that it will be signed into law shortly.

Nuclear power plays a major role in providing our country with clean, reliable energy. It produces almost 20 percent of our total electricity generation, including almost 9 percent of the electricity generated in the great state of Texas. Moreover, right now nuclear plants generate over 50 percent of our carbon-free electricity nationwide.

However, current technical, economic, and policy challenges prevent nuclear energy from playing a larger role in developing our clean energy infrastructure. The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act takes several positive steps to address these barriers. Implementing the provisions in this bill will help accelerate the development of advanced nuclear energy technologies that are safer, less expensive, more efficient, and produce less waste than the current generation of nuclear reactors.

But while I am certainly happy that this bill will soon be the law of the land, I know that there are many other policy proposals that merit our consideration as we aim to ensure that these technologies can play an important role in securing our clean energy future.

This is why I am so pleased that we have this distinguished panel here today. I look forward to hearing each of your views on the current status of the advanced nuclear industry, and the steps we need to take to lead the world in developing and ultimately deploying the next generation of nuclear power.

With that, I yield back.