

## **OPENING STATEMENT**

Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson

House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology  
Full Committee Markup  
*“H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act”*  
January 12, 2015; 10:00 AM

Good morning and thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this markup of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which I am very pleased to co-sponsor with you.

As I have noted before, nuclear power plays a vital role in providing our country with clean, reliable energy. As folks on this Committee already know, I am very concerned about the growing threat of climate change. Nuclear power can and should play a key role in our efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of our electricity sector.

But there currently are technical, economic, and policy challenges that prevent nuclear energy from playing a larger role in enabling our clean energy future. The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act takes several positive steps to address these challenges. 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.

It is my hope that the provisions in this bill can aid in ensuring a bright future for the U.S. nuclear energy industry. I know we can find bipartisan support for this effort not only on this Committee but more broadly in this Congress.

I do want to point out one concern I have about this bill. Despite being an authorization of programs, we do not specify recommended funding levels for the nuclear programs at DOE. While I do recognize the difficulty of authorizing funding levels these days, I think it is an important function of our Committee. As we move this bill forward, I hope it is something we can revisit.

On that note, I would like to once again express my appreciation for the process we followed to put this bill together. Majority and Minority staff worked closely together every step of the way, from engaging stakeholders through helping to craft and incorporate suggested changes to bill language. This is a great example of what we can achieve when we put politics aside and join forces to address the challenges facing our nation’s research enterprise.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and I yield back. ■