

January 7, 2016

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
2409 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Ranking Member, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Johnson:

Thank you for your leadership in support of advancing the bi-partisan *H.R. 4084, The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2015*. We know that you and the committee are committed to finding energy solutions that will propel our nation forward by providing nuclear energy capacity that will safely and cleanly meet our growing demands.

We especially applaud the committee's work in promoting university research and capacity building in this legislation. Universities are a critical component to the future of advanced nuclear technologies, and complement the work being done at our national energy labs. Extramural research in everything from basic science, materials development, modeling, and testing is central to transitioning innovations from the lab to the commercial sector. Moreover, we appreciate the committee's recognition that universities are necessary partners in the development of a skilled workforce for the future.

As the largest nuclear engineering program in the U.S., Texas A&M University is proud of the world class education and research programs we provide in this field. In addition to housing seven accelerators and a high-energy pulsed plasma lab, Texas A&M is also the only university in the nation with two reactors, giving researchers unique capabilities to address the most challenging questions ranging from reactor safety and design to thermal hydraulics. Given the aging workforce in this critical area, Texas A&M University also prides itself on preparing thousands of students and researchers for this growing industry. In fact, our Nuclear Power Institute has been effectively working with the International Atomic Energy Agency to address key human resource development and outreach challenges.

We are grateful for your steadfast leadership of the Science Committee and all the hard work and interest of your staff in support of nuclear energy research. We look forward to continuing our work with you in the coming months and years.

Sincerely,



M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D., P.E.
Vice Chancellor and Dean of Engineering
Director, Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station
Harold J. Haynes Dean's Chair Professor

cc: Chancellor John Sharp
President Michael K. Young Mr. Scott Sudduth