



January 8, 2016

Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman
Committee on Science, Space & Technology
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Ranking Member
Committee on Science, Space & Technology
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Johnson,

We wish to confirm support for your recently introduced bill, HR 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2015.

The expanded utilization of nuclear energy can contribute to meeting future energy demands and reducing pollutant emissions. However, the future of nuclear power generation depends upon development of economically competitive non-light water technology capable of delivering: (1) power cost reductions, (2) enhanced design safety, (3) reduced nuclear proliferation risk and (4) significant reduction in waste generation.

However, the very long lead time to develop new nuclear technologies, including the licensing process changes needed for their deployment, constitute an impediment to private sector investment. Thus, it is necessary for the Federal Government to expand its support for advanced non-light-water nuclear energy research and development.

In this regard, we encourage your Committee to review the cost sharing practices enacted in EPACT of 2005 in section 998. Although that legislation allows the Secretary of Energy to waive the normally required 20% industry cost-share in the case of R&D projects, DOE has not used this authority. We believe DOE should be encouraged to implement substantial reductions in cost sharing for long-range development projects required to burn down technology risk prior to commercialization.

The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act would assist U.S. companies in accessing the full range of technical capabilities within the federal government and national laboratories; accelerate development of world leading scientific user facilities; and provide a sound public policy basis, with important bipartisan support, for new federal investment in this important field.

In the past, the U.S. led the world in developing new nuclear reactor technology and must now make the investment required to reassert leadership among international state competitors.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Neal Blue".

Neal Blue
Chairman & CEO