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ASP
American Security Project

February 24, 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

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Johnson,

We write on behalf of American Security Project and the Business Council for American Security to express our support for H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2015.

Nuclear energy offers a clean and safe energy source for America's future and is a vital component of our national security. To this end, this bipartisan bill directs the DOE to prioritize research and development (R&D) infrastructure in a way that benefits private sector investment in advanced reactor technologies, including fission and fusion energy research.

Fusion energy offers a clean, safe, and abundant energy source for America and as a result, represents a critical component of the U.S.'s national and energy security future. With countries like China and Russia already committed to advanced nuclear energy technology, the question is not if demonstration-level fusion power can be realized within a decade. Rather, it is whether or not the United States will lead the commercialization of this technology or depend on the resources of others.

HR 4084 bolsters public-private partnerships among nuclear scientists, specifically in SEC. 951. subsections (1-5) and SEC. 958. Subsection (a). These provisions support the transfer of technology from National Laboratories to the private sector and private sector collaboration with the Laboratories to analyze novel reactor concepts. The result could lead have profound implications on nuclear fission and fusion research and significantly increase the speed of progress while also lowering costs and waste, increasing efficiency, and moving the United States to an exponentially more secure energy future.

Private companies have already begun experimenting with alternative reactor designs that would create substantially less waste or recycle waste altogether. A public-private partnership could accelerate R&D of these types of reactors, meaning the public could witness safer and more efficient reactors in a much shorter time span.

Finally, H.R 4084 calls for the Secretary of Energy to carry out programming to analyze reactor concepts proposed by the private sector. With the assistance of experts in various Federal agencies and National Laboratories, private firms

will obtain additional input on novel reactor concepts. This will increase the efficacy and efficiency of the reactors in addition to improving their safety and expediteing the construction process.

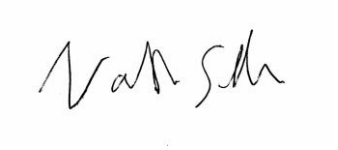
The ***Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act*** improves public-private cooperation among nuclear scientists in various spheres and supports U.S. national security. It gives ample opportunity for both fission and fusion scientists, both of whom would benefit from technology sharing, access to enhanced software, a better neutron source, and additional expert input. The formalized opportunities for collaboration it offers will dramatically decrease the time and money necessary to achieve advanced reactor technologies-securing America's long-term future at a faster more assured pace.

H.R. 4084 is an important step in establishing energy security and independence and should be passed with expediency. Doing so would further economic growth and job creation across the energy sector, move to restore America as the world's leader in developing new reactor technology and ensure the United States' national security strategy is not dictated by energy dependence.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen A. Cheney
BGen USMC (Ret)
Chief Executive Officer

Dante A. Disparte
CEO, Risk Cooperative
Chairperson, Business Council for American Security



Nathan Gilliland
CEO, General Fusion
Chair, Fusion Advisory Committee