COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)
Full Committee Markup:
H.R. 4084, the *Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act*

Chairman Smith: Good morning. Today, the Science Committee will consider H.R. 4084, the "Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act."

This bipartisan legislation sets Congressional priorities for long-term research and development investments. These R&D investments will maintain American technological leadership.

Nuclear energy represents promising emission-free technology and America's best opportunity to bring reliable electricity to the developing world. H.R. 4084 harnesses the strengths of the national labs, universities, and private sector and will breathe new life into America's research and technology communities.

I thank the Energy Subcommittee Chairman, Randy Weber, and Science Committee Ranking Member, Eddie Bernice Johnson, for their leadership on this issue and for introducing this legislation.

It is great to join many other members of the Science Committee as a cosponsor, which include Representatives Lipinski, Loudermilk, Perlmutter, Comstock, Tonko, Bridenstine, Babin, Rohrabacher, Hultgren, Westerman, Knight, Posey, Lucas, and Neugebauer.

H.R. 4084 provides the Department of Energy (DOE) with the direction and certainty it needs to develop long term research and development planning and infrastructure within its Office of Nuclear Energy.

This legislation authorizes DOE to take advantage of the national labs' supercomputers in order to accelerate R&D for advanced fission and fusion reactor concepts with the help and expertise of the private sector, universities, and national labs.
The bill also puts forth a timeline for DOE to complete a research reactor user facility within 10 years that will enable proprietary and academic research to validate supercomputing models.

Finally, H.R. 4084 creates a reliable mechanism for the private sector to partner with DOE labs and develop advanced fission and fusion prototype reactors at DOE sites.

The amendment in the nature of a substitute updates the Nuclear Energy R&D subtitle of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and makes provisions of today's bill part of that law. The amendment also includes language provided by Rep. Foster that requires DOE to consider the life-cycle and lifetime operating costs of the user facility proposed in this bill. And I thank Mr. Foster for this improvement.

Nuclear power has been a proven source of safe and emission-free electricity for over half a century since it was first developed in the United States.

Strategic investments in advanced nuclear reactor technology should play a much more meaningful role in reducing global emissions.

However, our ability to move from R&D to market deployment has been hampered by government red tape. The U.S. has not lived up to its potential when it comes to nuclear energy.

This legislation enables our talented engineers in the private sector, academia, and at the national labs to develop the next generation of nuclear technology here in the United States.

H.R. 4084 implements bipartisan, long term R&D investments that will spur American competitiveness and keep us on the forefront of nuclear energy technology. Nuclear energy can be a clean, cheap answer to an energy independent, pro-growth, secure future if we let the science and market forces prevail.

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