

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
OF KRISTINE L. SVINICKI, COMMISSIONER  
UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS**

**JUNE 13, 2012**

Thank you Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Inhofe, and members of the Committee. I am grateful to President Obama for nominating me to an additional term of service on the Commission. If the Senate acts favorably on my nomination, I would be privileged to continue this work.

When I arrived at NRC in March of 2008, I joined an agency already deeply active in the review of applications for the construction of new nuclear plants and new reactor designs; an agency continuing to adapt its security framework to post-9/11 realities; and an agency whose regulatory program is regarded as among the most informed and disciplined in the world. In approaching this work, I have researched the facts and the history of issues, and have endeavored to understand fully the effect of proposed regulatory changes. I have also looked to the fundamental guideposts envisioned in the NRC's Principles of Good Regulation – Independence, Openness, Efficiency, Clarity, and Reliability – in assessing the issues.

The tragic events in Japan in 2011 cast NRC's work into even sharper relief for the American public. Nuclear technology is unique and its use demands an unwavering commitment to safety principles. When I last appeared before this Committee in March, the NRC had just issued a series of orders to nuclear power plant licensees requiring features to mitigate beyond design basis extreme natural events, the installation of hardened venting systems, and enhanced instrumentation for spent fuel pools. The NRC is also requiring nuclear power plant licensees to undertake substantial reevaluations of seismic and flooding hazards at their sites. Since issuing these requirements three months ago, the NRC has been developing and communicating the specific guidance for implementing these requirements and has continued to hold public meetings on these topics. This work has benefited from the input of nuclear operators, nuclear safety and environmental interest groups, and the public.

Of course, none of this could be achieved without the hard work and commitment of the women and men of the NRC and their sustained efforts to advance the NRC's mission of ensuring adequate protection of public health and safety and promoting the common defense and security. Their commitment has inspired and impressed me. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my personal gratitude to each of them for welcoming me to the NRC and supporting me in the contributions I have endeavored to make to our shared goals.

Madam Chairman, Senator Inhofe, and members of the Committee, thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to appear today and look forward to the Committee's questions.