

March 6, 2017

Chairman John Barrasso
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Ranking Member Tom Carper
513 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper:

I am writing to voice strong support for the recently-introduced bill, S. 512, the Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act. Protecting the continued safe operation of the existing fleet of nuclear reactors and enabling the development and deployment of advanced reactors can play a major role in meeting both domestic and global targets for emissions reductions. It can also allow U.S. industry to compete for a growing global market, create domestic job growth, and enhance America's international influence. To reap these rewards, U.S. policy must encourage continued production from our existing nuclear fleet while also providing a viable path to commercialization for advanced nuclear. The current structure of certain processes at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), however, may actually act as a deterrent to safe and economical operation and advancement of nuclear technology.

Innovation in the private sector has grown rapidly over the past several years, but regulatory uncertainty at the NRC is hampering long-term investment. The current licensing process was developed for a previous generation of technology and is ill-equipped for advanced reactors. This bipartisan bill would require the NRC to provide a pathway for advanced reactor licensing that would better guarantee their safety and encourage continued investment in innovation. It would also provide much-needed transparency and fee reform to address concerns about increasing regulatory costs for our existing nuclear fleet.

We applaud the introduction of S. 512 and hope that your Committee quickly approves it. The United States government plays a vital role in the future of the advanced nuclear sector and this bill establishes the regulatory certainty the industry needs to succeed. We look forward to continuing to support it as it moves through the House and Senate.

Sincerely,



Josh Freed
Vice President for the Clean Energy Program
Third Way

cc:

Senator Mike Crapo
Senator Sheldon Whitehouse
Senator Cory Booker
Senator Jim Inhofe