

AUC LLC

The Reno Creek Project

March 15, 2017

The Honorable John Barrasso
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso:

On behalf of AUC LLC, a small business engaged in development of a uranium mine and processing plant near Gillette, Wyoming, I want to confirm our support of the proposed Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act (S. 512). I have long appreciated your leadership on energy legislation and am pleased that you have assembled a strong array of colleagues to support S. 512, including Senators Sheldon Whitehouse, Jim Inhofe, Cory Booker, Mike Crapo, Deb Fischer, Shelly Moore Capito, Joe Manchin, Bob Casey, and Tammy Duckworth.

It's quite encouraging that such legislation is so strongly bipartisan, as it will help encourage a stable supply of domestic uranium to power our nuclear reactors. Nuclear power is responsible for nearly 2/3 of green electricity in the US, a strong contributor to a healthy and prosperous economy. In addition to the obvious support for the advanced nuclear industry, S. 512 contains important reforms to modernize the Nuclear Regulatory Commissions (NRC) licensing process and resulting fee structure for uranium recovery facilities. We are just the most recent successful participant in the process, having finally received our Source Material License in February 2017, after four and a half years, including multiple delays readily admitted by the agency. The provision to direct the NRC to examine the feasibility of extending the duration of uranium recovery licenses from 10 to 20 years is only one of the many excellent features brought about by the legislation, particularly given the known low-risk nature of uranium recovery projects.

We also strongly support the provisions in S. 512 to bring greater transparency and accountability to the Department of Energy's (DOE) management of the federal excess uranium inventory. The recent issuance of a Secretarial Determination exempting down-blended uranium from the USEC Privatization Act provisions protecting the domestic uranium industry reinforces the legislation's transparency requirements. We remain concerned that DOE continues to fail to meet that obligation and continues to make uranium transfers without any meaningful public input, in full defiance of the Act.

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S. 512 will ensure stakeholders have a voice in the process and will place annual limits on the amount of DOE material that can enter the market, starting with the baseline of DOE's current level of transfers. On behalf of the domestic uranium industry, thank you again for your leadership on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

AUC LLC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Viellenave', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

James Viellenave
President