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April 20, 2016

The Honorable Jim Inhofe  
Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Inhofe,

X Energy, LLC (X-energy) is a small advanced nuclear reactor company developing a meltdown proof, proliferation-resistant and emissions-free energy solution. We have pledged to create American jobs and help rebuild American leadership in nuclear energy innovation. X-energy has also just received one of the two DOE awards in January 2016 to progress the development of our advanced reactor; a high temperature gas-cooled reactor (HTGR). The licensing of our HTGR, a non-light water reactor, within a reasonable schedule and within affordable cost is vital to our commercial success. We believe that moving forward with domestically developed advanced reactors now is critical for the United States to achieve competitiveness in clean energy production.

The Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act is a significant step in the right direction and we appreciate your leadership in addressing issues affecting advanced nuclear reactor development. Of the many challenges to developing an operational system, we are most critically concerned about the affordability of upfront costs associated with licensing. The United States government's role in enabling the licensing of advanced nuclear reactors should be comparable to what it was for the current fleet of operating nuclear reactors, where the government paid for the licensing process and the applicant/operator began paying regulatory operating fees once revenue was generated. If we, as a Nation, are going to achieve the multiple benefits of advanced reactors, we must identify what needs to be done to bring these designs to fruition as rapidly as possible.

This is a compelling time to influence the future of energy solutions in this country and in fact, the world. Nuclear energy must be a part of this solution, and the development of the next generation non-light water reactors are essential to accomplishing this. China has just committed to 40 new nuclear power plants between 2016 and 2020, and they along with Russia and several other countries are moving forward with non-LWR technology. China's first HTGR plant of two reactors is expected to begin operations in November 2017, with 12 additional reactors planned. The United States has been the "gold standard" for safety of nuclear reactors. If the United States is going to continue to lead, we must accelerate the development and licensing of the next generation of safer, economical, nuclear reactors. Failure to do so will relinquish this critical leadership role to countries such as China, Korea and Japan.

At X-energy, we believe there is an urgency to the modernization of the NRC's licensing process to accommodate advanced nuclear reactors to achieving commercial operation of these nuclear plants. We are excited about this bill and strongly support its intent. We look forward to continuing to work with you to move it through Congress.

Please feel free to contact us to answer any questions, or if you would like any additional information.

Respectfully,

*Harlan Bowers*

Harlan Bowers  
President  
X Energy, LLC