

TESTIMONY OF

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For A Hearing

BEFORE

United States Senate
Committee On Environment And Public Works

ON

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

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Washington, D.C.

Chairman Capito, Ranking Member Whitehouse and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission appreciates this Committee's bipartisan leadership through the ADVANCE Act, which is guiding modernization of our regulatory framework to accelerate new reactors and expand existing capacity.

The NRC's safety mission remains our top priority. Congress also made clear that our mission must enable the safe and secure use of nuclear technologies through efficient and predictable regulation.

In the regulatory context, enabling means aligning our regulations with actual risks, adapting to new technologies and adding flexibility where safety is maintained. Enabling is how the NRC fulfills its safety commitment and delivers public benefit.

America urgently needs more energy due to artificial intelligence, data centers and industrial growth. Nuclear energy is seen as essential to our energy security.

Now the question is execution—whether America can build at scale, on schedule and at lower cost. That is where the NRC matters. Regulatory uncertainty is capital risk—and capital will go elsewhere if risk is too high.

This is a defining moment for the NRC and for nuclear energy in America. What we do now will determine whether nuclear is deployable at scale—or remains limited to one-off projects.

As America's nuclear safety regulator, the NRC's role is clear—our safety decisions must be credible, predictable and timely. Accordingly, the NRC is making reforms driven by Congress and the President.

Through this period of change, the NRC is coordinating with federal partners, including the Department of Energy, to meet the nation's energy needs. In doing so, the NRC continues to deliver its safety decisions consistent with its mission and independent from the Department of Energy.

As the NRC implements the ADVANCE Act and Executive Order 14300, we are focusing on what matters most to safety by reducing unnecessary conservatism and applying risk-informed, performance-based approaches consistently.

The NRC is making major structural changes to how we oversee and license nuclear facilities. Our oversight programs are being rebalanced to reflect the high levels of safety and security performance across the industry. And we are delivering new licensing systems that are predictable, efficient and designed for deployment.

Over the past year, the NRC has delivered results—evidence of a more disciplined and efficient regulatory approach. We finalized Part 53. We issued a commercial advanced reactor construction permit. We approved a restart pathway for a permanently shut-down reactor. We renewed 13 operating reactor licenses. We issued a license for a TRISO fuel fabrication facility. We launched a fusion regulatory framework. And we prepared 18 EO 14300 draft rules.

These actions demonstrate that timely regulatory decisions and a strong safety focus go hand in hand. That is how America regains leadership in nuclear energy.

To meet this moment, I am focusing the agency on three priorities:

First, core mission delivery with safety, efficiency and speed.

Second, leadership and operational excellence.

Third, sustainable performance through a culture of continuous improvement.

Our success in this moment depends on our people. Every day, the dedicated NRC staff deliver on a safety mission essential to public trust in nuclear technologies.

Delivering our mission requires realistic planning, disciplined budget execution and alignment with strategic outcomes. The FY 2027 budget reflects these principles and the resources needed to accelerate deployment, while ensuring the continued safety and security of the operating fleet.

Going forward, the American people can expect credible, predictable and timely safety decisions from the NRC.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.