

June 26, 2018

The Honorable Rick Perry
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Perry:

We write to commend you for recognizing the important role our civil nuclear energy sector plays in bolstering America's national security. We urge you to continue to take concrete steps to ensure the national security attributes of U.S. nuclear power plants are properly recognized by policymakers and are valued in U.S. electricity markets.

The national security benefits of a strong domestic nuclear energy sector take many forms, many of which overlap and together are woven into the nation's greater strength and resilience. For example:

- Our nation's nuclear power plants are among the most robust elements of U.S. critical infrastructure, offering a level of protection against natural and adversarial threats that goes far beyond most other elements of our nation's electrical grid. The Department of Defense depends on the nation's grid to power 99 percent of its installations, meaning large scale disruptions affect the nation's ability to defend itself.
- Nuclear plants have up to two years' worth of fuel on site, providing valuable fuel diversity and increasing the resilience of our electrical grid by eliminating the supply vulnerabilities that face some other forms of energy supply.
- Several national security organizations, including our nuclear Navy and significant parts of the Department of Energy, benefit from a strong civil nuclear sector. Many of the companies that serve the civil nuclear sector also supply the nuclear Navy and major DOE programs. For example, the Administration's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review noted that the United States is unable to produce enriched uranium for national security purposes. Re-establishing this capability will be far easier and more economical with a strong, thriving civil nuclear sector. Moreover, the nuclear industry is an important career destination for military veterans.
- Nuclear energy is by far our nation's largest source of emissions-free generation. Carbon dioxide emissions from other forms of electricity production contribute to changes in our climate, and a changing climate has been identified by the national security community as a national security risk.
- Competitiveness internationally is inextricably linked to maintaining a strong domestic nuclear program. More than six decades ago, the United States developed what is today the commercial nuclear industry, which established and maintained a leadership role that

transcends power generation. However, we are in jeopardy of losing our edge and missing out on much of a global opportunity estimated at over half a trillion dollars. Today, there are 56 reactors under construction in the world and this expansion is largely driven by China and Russia.

- A strong civil nuclear export sector creates deep and long-lasting relationships between the U.S. and partner nations across important areas that advance America's national security interests, including nonproliferation, nuclear safety, and physical and cyber security. If we do not continue to play a major role in the global market for nuclear reactors, technology and fuel, our influence over nonproliferation and nuclear safety standards will be greatly diminished.

Last year you spurred a national conversation about the vital role nuclear energy plays in ensuring a resilient electrical grid. That important discussion continues, and deliberations are now underway at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, within regional transmission organizations, and at state public utility commissions regarding ways to properly value the grid resilience delivered by our nation's nuclear power plants. Although those entities' discussions are vital, their purviews do not include the national security attributes of nuclear power. Thus, their important considerations must be integrated with the broader national security imperatives and perspectives, and that integration can only occur at your level.

These deliberations must be conducted with care and will, of necessity, take time to complete. In the interim, we urge you to ensure that no more nuclear power plants are closed prematurely due to insufficient valuation of nuclear energy's national security, resilience, and other benefits in our nation's electricity markets.

Sincerely,

Mr. Daniel F. Akerson
Former Chairman and CEO, General Motors Company

Amb. Linton Brooks
Former Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration

Dr. John C. Browne
Former Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory

Rear Adm. John D. Butler, USN (Ret.)
Chair, College of Natural Sciences Advisory Council, University of Texas at Austin

Mr. Scott Campbell
President of the Howard Baker Forum and Managing Shareholder of Baker Donelson-Washington

BGen. Stephen Cheney, USMC (Ret.)
CEO, American Security Project

Adm. Henry G. Chiles, Jr., USN (Ret.)
Former Commander, U.S. Strategic Command

Mr. Thomas Christopher
Former CEO, AREVA North America

Dr. John Deutch
Institute Professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and former DOE Under Secretary and
Director of Energy Research

Dr. Nils Diaz
Former Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Adm. Kirkland H. Donald, USN (Ret.)
Former Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program

Sen. Byron Dorgan
Former U.S. Senator, North Dakota

Ms. Constance Douris
Vice President, Lexington Institute

Ms. Susan Eisenhower
Former Commissioner, Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future

Vice Adm. Jeffrey L. Fowler, USN (Ret.)
60th Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy

Dr. David Gattie
Professor, University of Georgia

Adm. Edmund P. Giambastiani, Jr., USN (Ret.)
Former Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Amb. Thomas Graham
Executive Chairman, Lightbridge Corporation

Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert, USN (Ret.)
Former Chief of Naval Operations

Sen. Judd Gregg
Former U.S. Senator and former Governor of New Hampshire

Vice Adm. John J. Grossenbacher, USN (Ret.)
Former Director, Idaho National Laboratory

Dr. John J. Hamre
Former Deputy Secretary of Defense

Dr. John R. Harvey
Former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological
Defense Programs

Dr. Siegfried Hecker
Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University and former Director, Los
Alamos National Laboratory

Mr. Edward Bruce Held
Former Director, DOE Intelligence and Counterintelligence

Rear Adm. Michael Hewitt, USN (Ret.)
Co-Founder and CEO, IP3 Security

Mr. Andrew Holland
COO, American Security Project

Dr. Robert F. Ichord
Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Transformation

Dr. Scott Jones
Nonresident Fellow, Stimson Center

Adm. Timothy J. Keating, USN (Ret.)
Former Commander, USPACOM/USNORTHCOM/NORAD

Dr. Dale Klein
Former Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission and former Assistant to the Secretary of
Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs

Vice Adm. Al Konetzni, Jr., USN (Ret.)
Former President, West Valley Demonstration Project

Dr. Steven E. Koonin
Former Under Secretary of Energy for Science

Rear Adm. Joseph Krol, USN (Ret.)
Former Associate Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration

Dr. Robert Kuckuck
Former Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory

Dr. Edward G. Liszka
Director Emeritus, Applied Research Laboratory (Navy UARC) and Defense Related Research
Units, Pennsylvania State University

Mr. John R. Longenecker
President, Longenecker & Associates, Inc.

Sen. Trent Lott
Former U.S. Senator, Mississippi

Dr. Peter B. Lyons
Former Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission and former Assistant Secretary of
Energy for Nuclear Energy

Dr. William J. Madia
Former Director, Oak Ridge and Pacific Northwest National Laboratories

Mr. William F. Martin
Former Deputy Secretary of Energy

Dr. Richard Meserve
Former Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Adm. Richard W. Mies, USN (Ret.)
Former Commander, U.S. Strategic Command

Mr. Franklin Miller
Former Senior Director for Defense Policy and Arms Control, National Security Council

Dr. Warren (Pete) Miller, Jr
Former Assistant Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Energy

Mr. Arthur L. Money
Former Assistant Secretary of Defense

Vice Adm. Robert R. Monroe, USN (Ret.)
Former Director, Defense Nuclear Agency

Vice Adm. George P. Nanos, Jr., USN (Ret.)
Former Commander Naval Sea Systems Command and former Director, Los Alamos National
Laboratory

Adm. Robert J. Natter, USN (Ret.)
Former Commander, U.S. Navy's Fleet Forces Command

Mr. William Ostendorff
Former Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Mr. Daniel B. Poneman
Former Deputy Secretary of Energy

Mr. Anthony Principi
Former Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Dr. Charles W. Pryor
Retired Chairman, Westinghouse Electric Co. and URENCO USA

Mr. Stephen G. Rademaker
Former Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of State

Dr. Victor H. Reis
Former Assistant Secretary of Energy for Defense Programs, Director of Defense Research & Engineering, Director of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

Amb. C. Paul Robinson
President Emeritus of Sandia National Laboratories and Vice-Chairman of ARC Nuclear

Mr. John W. Rowe
Chairman Emeritus, Exelon Corporation

Dr. Gary Samore
Former White House Coordinator for Arms Control and Nonproliferation

Lt. Gen. Norman Seip, USAF (Ret.)
Former Commander, 12th Air Force (Air Forces Southern)

Sec. George Shultz
Former Secretary of Labor, Secretary of the Treasury, and Secretary of State

Adm. Leighton Smith, USN (Ret.)
Former CINC U.S. Naval Forces, Europe, Allied Forces Southern Europe, and Commander, Implementation Forces, Bosnia

Mr. Stu Solomon
President, IP3 Corporation

Dr. Paul Stockton
Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs

Sen. Jim Talent
Former U.S. Senator, Missouri

Dr. C. Bruce Tarter
Director Emeritus, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

Dr. Jeffrey Wadsworth
Former President and CEO, Battelle Memorial Institute

Gen. Charles F. Wald, USAF (Ret.)
Former Deputy Commander, European Command

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Former Vice Chairman and COO, Constellation Energy and former Chairman of Constellation Energy Nuclear Group

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Former U.S. Senator, Virginia and former Secretary of the Navy

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Former Chairman, Georgia Public Service Commission