

OPENING STATEMENT

Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)
Committee on Science, Space, & Technology

A Review of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Licensing Process
Energy Subcommittee Hearing

July 29, 2015

Good morning and thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing. I would also like to thank Chairman Burns for being here today. I believe that it has been several decades since we last had the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission testify before this Committee, and I hope your experience here this morning does not make you wish you had waited just a little longer.

Nuclear energy can play a pivotal role in our nation's clean energy future, and it is important to ensure that the licensing process enables innovations that will make the next generation of reactors both safer and more cost competitive.

That said, I think it is also important to emphasize that the NRC's primary mission is to protect the health and safety of the American people, and I want to ensure that any steps we take to encourage the development of new nuclear technologies do not in any way undermine this sacred trust.

Though this Committee does not have legislative jurisdiction over the NRC, I'm optimistic that we can have a productive conversation today that will provide guidance on how best to develop the licensing process for future reactors. There are many potential benefits to be gained from the growth of a robust U.S.-based advanced nuclear reactor industry. I hope progress at today's hearing can bring us closer to achieving that brighter future.

With that, I yield back.