

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,

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