

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 17, 2020

The Honorable James Inhofe  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inhofe and Ranking Member Reed:

We write to urge your support for the inclusion of S. 903, the Nuclear Energy Leadership Act (NELA), in the Fiscal Year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Nuclear energy provides many benefits, from zero-emission power to high reliability and energy security, but its contribution to national security is often underappreciated.

The Atlantic Council recently estimated nuclear energy's annual contribution to U.S. national security to be \$42 billion. Civilian nuclear energy benefits the Department of Defense (DOD) through a shared source of both human capital, supply chains, and technology development with the Navy. Commercial nuclear power provides long-term, high-paying career stability for Navy veterans while civilian nuclear energy also provide a high-quality nuclear engineering workforce for the Navy.

The military requires domestic sources of uranium for its submarines and robust commercial demand for uranium is necessary to maintain a stable uranium market. Many nuclear energy companies supply both commercial and defense needs. For example, two of the three awardees for the first phase of the DOD Strategic Capabilities Office's Project Pele are companies that are primarily focused on commercial nuclear energy. There is also the potential to develop, demonstrate, and then widely deploy advanced reactor technologies at military bases and facilities, thereby enhancing grid security and reliability.

A strong civil nuclear sector benefits U.S. geopolitical goals. Exporting a reactor creates a 100-year relationship with the recipient country. Russia and China have recognized this and are using their state-backed financing to reshape global energy politics. A robust civil nuclear industry is also essential to U.S. nonproliferation leadership. When the United States is leading in nuclear technology and exports, we can hold other countries accountable on security and safeguards requirements. Russia and China do not require the same assurances of peaceful use as the United States.

NELA will enable a new generation of advanced nuclear energy technologies to reinvigorate U.S. nuclear leadership. It will enable a future for the U.S. nuclear energy industry by investing in advanced nuclear technology demonstrations, research and development infrastructure, fuel security, and workforce development. NELA passed the Energy and Natural Resources Committee by voice vote and has broad stakeholder support.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



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Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator



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Cory Booker  
United States Senator



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Thom Tillis  
United States Senator



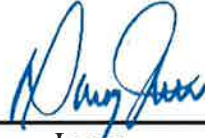
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Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator



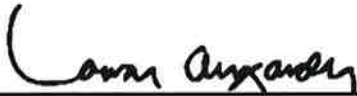
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Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator



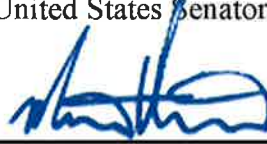
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Doug Jones  
United States Senator



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Lamar Alexander  
United States Senator



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Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



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John Barrasso, MD  
United States Senator



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Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



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Rob Portman  
United States Senate



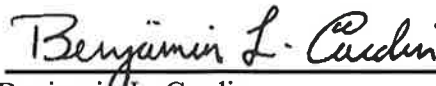
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Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



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Mike Crapo  
United States Senator



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Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



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Shelley Moore Capito  
United States Senator



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Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



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James E. Risch  
United States Senator



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Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



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Lindsey O. Graham  
United States Senator



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Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
United States Senator