

**Statement of Commissioner Stephen G. Burns to the
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works**

December 13, 2017

Chairman Barrasso, Ranking Member Carper, and distinguished members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Committee on the NRC's dedication to its safety and security mission as we focus on ways to carry out that mission in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The Chairman's testimony accurately summarizes the agency's significant efforts over the last several years to improve its efficiency and effectiveness, efforts that indeed continue. I have fully supported these efforts during my tenure as Chairman and in my current role as Commissioner. The Commission, our senior leadership, and our staff have demonstrated a proactive and responsible approach to good government through these efforts.

It is important to not lose sight of the fundamental safety and security mission of the NRC. From the NRC's inception, this Congressionally-mandated mission has driven the agency and continues to be the central focus of what we do every day. Having spent over 37 years of my professional career with the NRC, I know there are times when we've had to learn from our experience and improve our performance as a regulator, but on the whole I can say with no doubt in my mind that the NRC hits the mark the vast majority of the time in achieving a high standard of performance.

Over the past year we have continued to hold the industry accountable through our inspection and oversight program, ensured the effective implementation of lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident, focused on cyber-security, worked effectively with our partners in the States to ensure the safe and secure use of radioactive materials, and sought improved performance by fuel cycle facilities. At the same time we've undertaken reviews of the first small modular reactor submitted for design certification and of newly proposed facilities to produce radioisotopes for medical diagnostics and treatment, and prepared strategies to prepare for the review of advanced reactor designs. Credit belongs largely to the dedicated staff of the NRC for these accomplishments. I appreciate their day to day focus on ensuring the adequate protection of the public.

I thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.