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General Comment

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As a member of the public not employed by the nuclear energy industry, I encourage the commission to more explicitly support a regulatory environment that supports fast-tracked commercial development of the thorium-based molten salt reactor process, so that the United States can begin to lead the world on safe, next-generation nuclear power.

Right now, Molten Salt Reactor technology developed at Oak Ridge in the 1960s is collecting cobwebs while light water reactors continue to be the basis for our nation's nuclear power. While some companies in the United States are beginning to dust off the research and build businesses around molten salt processes, the entire regulatory process is built around uranium-based light water reactors and therefore alternative nuclear process companies have an enormous hurdle to jump to be given a competitive edge.

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Unfortunately, original research funded by US taxpayers will now be first commercialized by competition from overseas unless our regulatory environment changes in such a way that will expedite technological growth and competition within an entrenched industry.

In its battle to control smog and pollution, China recently announced it will expedite commercialization of thorium-based nuclear reactors within 10 years, down from its original goal of 25 years.[1] It is very likely the chosen process will be a Molten Salt type reactor.

As word about thorium-based molten salt reactors spreads among the public, communities of like-minded advocates are asking why we don't use a nuclear process that very likely:

- 1) Reduces long-term storage needs by a several orders of magnitude
- 2) Decreases proliferation and weaponization risks
- 3) Reduces environmental catastrophe risk
- 4) Utilizes a more abundant fuel source

Thank you for considering my comment. I want to see the US lead the world on the inevitable transition to safer nuclear power.

[1] <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/finance/ambroseevans-pritchard/100026863/china-going-for-broke-on-thorium-nuclear-power-and-good-luck-to-them/>