

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 14, 2017

The Honorable Kristine L. Svinicki
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Svinicki,

We are writing in support of the Northwest Medical Isotopes (NWMI) application to construct a medical radioisotope production facility in Missouri. The Commission has scheduled a hearing in January regarding the application from NWMI for a construction permit.

The U.S. currently cannot produce molybdenum-99 (Mo-99) domestically. This short-lived isotope decays into technetium-99 (Tc-99) which, in turn, is used in medical imaging for many diseases, including cancer and heart disease. The lack of U.S. production capacity is a problem that has plagued the U.S. radiopharmaceutical industry for decades. It is our understanding that this one facility would have the ability to supply nearly half of the U.S. demand for these isotopes.

NWMI, an innovative Oregon company, in partnership with Oregon State University and the University of Missouri, is seeking to address this U.S. reliance on uncertain foreign sources of these radioisotopes by building a production facility in Columbia, Missouri. Columbia is home to the University of Missouri's renowned research reactor (MURR). The design of the irradiation targets is based on the work of researchers at Oregon State University which lead to the creation of NWMI. The issuance of a construction permit for this facility would be a significant milestone in obtaining a domestic supply for this important national radiopharmaceutical technology.

We ask the Commission to give NWMI's application its full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Claire McCaskill
United States Senator

Cc: Hon. Jeff Baran, Commissioner
Hon. Stephen G. Burns, Commissioner