



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

July 29, 2019

The Honorable John A. Barrasso
Chairman, Committee on Environment
and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter of June 25, 2019, requesting that the NRC initiate a process to develop a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for the environmental reviews of advanced reactor applications.

The NRC is taking a number of actions to prepare for the environmental review of potential design, license, and permit applications for advanced reactors. Our near-term efforts include exploring whether the development of a GEIS for advanced reactors would provide an adequate environmental review and yield sufficient benefit to support taking this approach. To make these determinations, the staff is reviewing existing GEISs and its experience with other small scale facilities, such as research and test reactors, medical radioisotope facilities, and materials facilities, to see whether this prior work could help support the development of an advanced reactor GEIS. This topic was discussed at the June 27, 2019, advanced reactor stakeholders public meeting, and the NRC staff plans to present an update on this exploratory work at the next scheduled stakeholder public meeting on August 15, 2019. The NRC staff expects to finalize its path forward by the end of the fiscal year. If the staff's near-term assessment of the viability of preparing a GEIS justifies further effort, the agency will develop a schedule for the project and then initiate efforts to prepare the GEIS.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or have your staff contact Eugene Dacus, Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs, at 301-415-1776.

Sincerely,

Kristine L. Svinicki

cc: Senator Thomas R. Carper

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable John A. Barrasso
Chairman, Committee on Environment
and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
cc: Senator Thomas R. Carper

The Honorable Mike Braun
Chairman, Subcommittee on Clean Air
and Nuclear Safety
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
cc: Senator Sheldon Whitehouse