

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY
OF DAVID A. WRIGHT, COMMISSIONER
UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS**

MARCH 11, 2020

Thank you Chairman Barrasso, Ranking Member Carper, and esteemed members of the Committee. I appreciate the kind introduction and am very grateful to have the support of all seven members of my State's delegation. I would also like to say thank you to my family, who could not be here today. My mother, brothers and sisters, and three of my children live in South Carolina, and my oldest son and his wife live in Arkansas. Thank you for supporting me over the past two years because, as we all know, as I serve, you are serving as well. I want you to know that I love you all. For the record, mom really wanted to be here today. She was seated right behind me as I went through this process almost three years ago. Out of an abundance of caution, she decided that this is not the best time for her to be traveling. I am grateful to President Trump for nominating me to a five-year term on the Commission. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing my work on the Commission.

I also look forward to continuing to engage with this Committee. I am grateful for your commitment to your work and believe that your oversight of the NRC adds immeasurable value. As you know, the NRC has an important public health and safety mission. Every day that I have been at the NRC has given me a greater appreciation of that mission and the dedicated staff that ensure we meet this mission. It is an honor to serve our country as an NRC Commissioner, and I hope to continue to have that opportunity after June 30th.

It is a pleasure to serve with my colleagues on the Commission - Chairman Svinicki, Commissioner Baran, and Commissioner Caputo. As I said at last week's oversight hearing, I've learned so much from each of them and I appreciate their collegiality and insights on the matters before the Commission. If confirmed, I pledge to continue to work collegially with my colleagues, including Mr. Hanson, if he is confirmed.

As you know, the Commission has been involved in a number of important issues related to nuclear safety and security over the last two years. When considering these issues, safety is always my first thought and priority. I also strive to adhere to the NRC's Principles of Good Regulation, especially the principles of Independence, Efficiency, and Reliability.

To better understand the issues before me, I have visited the many types of facilities subject to NRC regulation and talked with the licensees and NRC staff at those facilities to understand the boots on the ground perspectives, challenges, and issues. Closer to home, I have made a practice of going cubicle by cubicle on every floor at NRC Headquarters and visiting NRC staff in each of the regional offices to learn about the people of the NRC and what is important to them. These interactions are extremely valuable to me, as the people of the NRC are its

greatest asset. Consistent with my open-door policy, I have met with people of all backgrounds and opinion. I have found that doing so enriches my perspective as a regulator.

As this Committee knows, these are times of change at the NRC and in the industry we regulate. While we are preparing for a future that is not completely clear, we are taking concrete steps now to ensure that we are flexible enough to meet whatever challenge is ahead. We are preparing for novel technologies while continuing to license existing technologies effectively and reliably. We are working to become a more modern, risk-informed regulator, consistent with direction in the Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act and our own Principles of Good Regulation. As the NRC prepares for the future, one thing remains constant: our laser focus on our important safety mission, which is to provide reasonable assurance of adequate protection of the public health and safety.

Chairman Barrasso, Ranking Member Carper, and members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear today, and I look forward to your questions.