

June 24, 2025

Chairman David Wright
Commissioner Annie Caputo
Commissioner Bradley Crowell
Commissioner Matthew Marzano

Commissioners,

We are a group of former NRC employees writing to you regarding the unprecedented decision by the President to fire Commissioner Hanson. This action endangers the independence of the NRC as it raises the specter of political considerations carrying greater weight than public health and safety. It must be remembered that the regulatory function of the Atomic Energy Commission was specifically transferred to the NRC in order to create an independent agency free from promoting nuclear energy that conflicted the AEC. The need for independence from politics is further emphasized by the recent Executive Orders that focus on speeding up licensing and the regulatory process.

Nobel laureate Richard Feynman wrote that “For a successful technology, reality must take precedence over public relations, for nature cannot be fooled.” We urge you to consider these words and use them as a guide for your actions in coming days to ensure NRC does not become a tool of political whims and desires to the detriment of the agency’s mission to ensure safe use of nuclear technology.

NRC’s Principles of Good Regulation¹ state that:

Nothing but the highest possible standards of ethical performance and professionalism should influence regulation. However, independence does not imply isolation. All available facts and opinions must be sought openly from licensees and other interested members of the public. The many and possibly conflicting public interests involved must be considered. Final decisions must be based on objective, unbiased assessments of all information, and must be documented with reasons explicitly stated.

The agency’s organizational values² call for integrity, that NRC is “trustworthy, reliable, ethical, unbiased.” These standards are incompatible with capricious politics. NRC’s independence has set the standard for other nations to follow, so the world is literally watching these developments. The nuclear industry’s credibility relies on an objective regulator. Accidents like those at Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima have demonstrated how events in one country can affect the world-wide nuclear industry. Succumbing to politics and surrendering NRC’s independence can only reduce the effectiveness of nuclear regulation in the United States as well as around the world, increasing the likelihood of a costly accident.

Your predecessor Edward McGaffigan spoke to young staff members graduating from the Nuclear Safety Professional Development Program in 2006. His remarks³ included these words:

¹ <https://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/values.html#principles>

² <https://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/values.html#values>

³ <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/commission/speeches/2006/exm-nsdpd-remarks.html>

My advice to you at the outset of your career is to bear in mind the word "honor" throughout your service. If you conduct yourself with honor, with integrity, and with diligence, you will have a great career. "Honor" often involves telling people, perhaps colleagues, perhaps supervisors, what they do not want to hear. I have throughout my career let the facts determine my position on issues. That can upset ideologues and theorists of all persuasions who do not let facts get in the way of their ideologies or their theories. And it may make you enemies. But stories I could tell you from my own career would persuade you that you can afford such enemies, but you can not afford to compromise your honor, your personal compass.

We ask that Commissioner McGaffigan's words guide you, that you set an example of integrity and honor as you lead the agency in these difficult times, following your oaths to uphold the Constitution.

This letter represents the thoughts of the individuals listed below and are based on hundreds of years of regulatory experience. We thank you for your time and consideration.

Signed:

	Position	Years of Service
Ed Baker III	Director, Advanced Reactor Program, Office of New Reactors (NRO)	33
Richard Barrett, PhD	Director, Division of Engineering, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR)	25
Tom Bergman	Director, Division of Engineering, NRO	23
Stephen Burns	NRC Chairman	38
Colleen Carol Casey	Materials Licensing Reviewer and Inspector, Office of Nuclear Materials and Safeguards (NMSS)	40.5
Jim Clifford	Director, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, Region I	45
Catherine Colleti	Audit Manager, Office of the Inspector General	38
Amy Cabbage	Senior Project Manager, NRR	35
Mark Deligatti	Deputy Director, Division of New Reactor Licensing, NRO	32.5
Melanie Galloway	Director, Division of Security Policy, Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response	33
Joe Gray	Associate General Counsel for Licensing and Regulation	32
Patricia Holahan, PhD	Director, Subsequent License Environmental Directorate, NMSS	33
Michael Jones	Project Manager, NRO	6
Ravi Joshi	Senior Project Manager, NRO	8
Tim Kobetz	Chief, Reactor Inspection Branch, NRR	31
Janice Dunn Lee	Director, Office of International Programs	41
Eric J. Leeds	Director, NRR	34
Jim Lieberman	Director, Office of Enforcement (OE)	30
Cynthia Pederson	Regional Administrator, Region III	34
Renee Pedersen	Differing Professional Opinions Program Manager	32.5
Roger Pedersen	Senior Health Physicist	35
Josephine M Piccone, Ph.D.	Director, Division of Nuclear Material Safety, State, Tribal, and Rulemaking Programs	42.5
Patricia A. Santiago	Chief, Accident Analysis Branch, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research	38
Jack Strosnider	Director, NMSS	31
John Szabo	Senior Counsel, Office of the General Counsel	44
Alison Tallarico	Sr. Human Resources Policy and Program Development Specialist, Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer	31
Patricia C. Vacca	Senior Project Manager, NMSS	33
Joe Williams, principal author	Senior Project Manager, NRR	29

Copies to:

Senator Shelley Moore Capito
Senator Sheldon Whitehouse
Senator Bernard Sanders
Senator Edward Markey
Senator Angela Alsobrooks

Representative Gerald Connolly
Representative James Comer
Representative Kweisi Mfume

Edwin Lyman, Union of Concerned Scientists
Steven Dolley, Platts Nuclear Publications
Michael Flannigan, Nuclear Energy Institute

NRCExecSec Resource

From: Joe Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2025 6:26 AM
To: David Wright; Annie Caputo; Matthew Marzano; Bradley Crowell
Cc: PDR Resource; PDR Resource; NRCExecSec Resource; Jenny Weil
Subject: [External_Sender] Letter to Commissioners
Attachments: 20250624 NRC letter re Hanson.pdf

Attached is a letter for the attention of the Commissioners regarding Commissioner Hanson's dismissal.

A copy of the letter is also being provided to selected members of the of the NRC's Congressional oversight committees, as well as other interested parties such as editors of the *Inside NRC* newsletter, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and the Nuclear Energy Institute.

Please ensure that the letter is placed in ADAMS and is made publicly available as soon as possible. I request that my email address be redacted if this portion of the message is included.

Thank you.

Joe Williams