



Committee: House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Energy

Event: [Energy Subcommittee Markup](#)

Date: July 14, 2026

Executive Summary:

On July 14, 2026 the House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Energy hosted a markup of the following six bills:

- Nuclear REFUEL Act ([H.R. 3978](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Bob Latta** (R-OH-05)
- American Enrichment Deployment Act ([H.R. 9612](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Russell Fry** (R-SC-07)
- Efficient Nuclear Licensing Hearings Act ([H.R. 5549](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Morgan Griffith** (R-VA-09)
- Nuclear Advisory Committee Reform Act ([H.R. 9613](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Diana Harshbarger** (R-TN-01)
- NRC Staff Pay Alignment Act ([H.R. 9614](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Robert Menendez** (D-NJ-08)
- Department of Energy Nuclear Transparency Act ([H.R. 9084](#))
 - Sponsored by Rep. **Kathy Castor** (D-FL-14)

Members across both parties agreed that expanding U.S. nuclear energy capacity is vital to meeting growing energy demand. Members broadly supported efforts to streamline the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) licensing process, strengthen domestic uranium enrichment capabilities, and advance new nuclear technologies.

Democrats stressed the importance of maintaining an independent NRC and investing in all clean energy sources.

Republicans described the NRC licensing process and existing regulatory requirements as obstacles that needed to be streamlined to enable faster construction of new reactors.

All bills passed out of the Subcommittee by voice vote with limited debate.

Member Toplines¹:

[Subcommittee Chair Latta](#): Latta explained that strengthening the domestic nuclear industry is essential to meeting growing U.S. energy demand. He expressed support for the six bills under consideration, arguing that they would further streamline nuclear licensing and help accelerate the deployment of new nuclear technologies.

¹ Opening statements for Subcommittee Ranking Member Castor and Full Committee Chair Guthrie were not available at the time of this memo's distribution.

Subcommittee Ranking Member Castor: Castor praised the Department of Energy's (DOE) \$175 billion loan initiative for long-lead nuclear components, but pointed out that nuclear energy alone will not address near-term energy needs. She supported streamlining the NRC's licensing process in parallel to continued investments in other clean energy sources, battery storage, and transmission infrastructure.

Full Committee Chair Brett Guthrie (R-KY-02): Guthrie expressed support for the six bills under consideration, arguing that they would make the NRC's licensing process more efficient, predictable, and timely. He said the legislation would eliminate unnecessary requirements under the *Atomic Energy Act*, helping to accelerate the deployment of new nuclear projects while maintaining an effective regulatory framework.

[*Full Committee Ranking Member Frank Pallone \(D-NJ-06\):*](#) Pallone emphasized the importance of expanding nuclear energy deployment in the U.S., but argued that maintaining an independent NRC is essential to ensuring public confidence in nuclear safety. He criticized the Trump administration's efforts to reduce the NRC's independence and expressed opposition to H.R. 9613, arguing that the bill would undermine the independence of the NRC's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS).

Legislation Considered:

Nuclear REFUEL Act (H.R. 3978)

- Member Toplines
 - Rep. **Scott Peters** (D-CA-50) spoke in support of H.R. 3978, explaining that the bill would make it easier to recycle and reuse spent nuclear fuel, helping establish a more reliable domestic nuclear fuel supply chain and strengthening U.S. energy security.
 - Peters argued that expanding spent fuel recycling would reduce reliance on foreign sources of nuclear fuel while supporting the long-term growth of the domestic nuclear industry.
 - Latta advocated for H.R. 3978, stating that the bill would streamline the licensing process for spent nuclear fuel reprocessing facilities and unlock additional energy from used nuclear fuel.
 - Rep. **Doris Matsui** (D-CA-07) expressed support for H.R. 3978, stating that it would make it easier to develop nuclear waste recycling facilities and advance spent fuel recycling technologies.
 - Matsui added that passing H.R. 3978 should not replace the need for Congress to establish a permanent federal nuclear waste management and disposal program.
- Amendments
 - [Latta 01](#) - Clarifies that spent fuel reprocessing authorized under the bill applies to processes that isolate plutonium for nonproliferation purposes and the legislation does not modify existing requirements for the export of spent fuel reprocessing technologies.

- Latta argued that the amendment provides a necessary clarification supported by the NRC and stakeholders seeking to recover valuable isotopes from reprocessed nuclear fuel.
 - The amendment was adopted by voice vote.
- **The bill as amended was adopted and forwarded to the full committee by voice vote.**

American Enrichment Deployment Act (H.R. 9612)

- Member Toplines
 - Fry spoke in support of H.R. 9612 and explained that the bill would help expand U.S. uranium enrichment capability and support the development of a safe, secure, and reliable domestic enrichment sector.
 - Rep. **Kim Schrier** (D-WA-08) expressed support for H.R. 9612. She explained that expanding domestic nuclear deployment requires increasing U.S. capacity to produce nuclear fuel.
- **The bill was adopted and forwarded to the full committee by voice vote.**

Efficient Nuclear Licensing Hearings Act (H.R. 5549)

- Member Toplines
 - Rep. **Troy Balderson** (R-OH-12) stated his support for H.R. 5549. He explained that the bill would streamline the NRC's review process by eliminating mandatory uncontested hearings for applications related to construction permits, operating licenses, and licenses to possess or use special nuclear materials.
 - Schrier noted her support for the bill and added that it will allow NRC regulators to focus on their core mission of protecting public health and safety.
- **The bill was adopted and forwarded to the full committee by voice vote.**

Nuclear Advisory Committee Reform Act (H.R. 9613)

- Member Toplines
 - Harshbarger spoke in support of her bill. She explained that it would improve nuclear safety by refocusing the ACRS on issues directly related to reactor design safety, particularly novel reactor technologies.
 - Castor expressed support for the bill's goal of directing the ACRS to focus on more complex, unique, and novel technical issues rather than well-understood matters.
 - She criticized H.R.9613 for limiting the ACRS's ability to review issues independent of NRC guidance.
 - Rep. **Craig Goldman** (R-TX-12) supported H.R.9613 and argued that it would streamline the reactor review process and allow ACRS to focus its expertise on significant safety issues and novel reactor designs.
 - Rep. **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez** (D-NY-14) opposed H.R. 9613 for limiting ACRS's independence from the NRC.
- **The bill was adopted and forwarded to the full committee by voice vote.**

NRC Staff Pay Alignment Act (H.R. 9614)

- Member Toplines
 - Reps. **Jennifer McClellan** (D-VA-04), Menendez, and Latta urged support for H.R. 9614, arguing that the bill would help the NRC recruit and retain highly qualified safety experts while addressing ongoing workforce shortages.
- **The bill was adopted and forwarded to the full committee by voice vote.**

Department of Energy Nuclear Transparency Act (H.R. 9084)

- Member Toplines
 - Castor supported her bill. She explained that it would promote transparency by strengthening congressional oversight of new DOE authorization processes for research and demonstration reactors.
- Amendments
 - [Miller-Meeks 01](#) - Adds to the information that may be withheld from disclosure and provides additional time for DOE to comply with public reporting requirements.
 - Rep. **Mariannette Miller-Meeks** (R-IA-01) supported the amendment and noted that it incorporates clarifications recommended by DOE and reflects feedback from previous expert testimony on H.R. 9084.
 - The amendment was agreed to by voice vote.
- **The bill as amended was adopted and forwarded to the full committee by voice vote.**