

TOPLINE: Lawmakers and nuclear regulators should keep cutting needless red tape so reliable, carbon-free nuclear power can be deployed more quickly and cheaply.

BACKGROUND: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is the federal agency responsible for regulating and licensing civilian nuclear reactors, while the Department of Energy (DOE) authorizes and operates reactors for government purposes. The NRC began regulating in 1975, and it has overseen a regulatory environment in which American nuclear power has largely stalled. The U.S. went from having one nuclear reactor in 1957 to [112](#) by 1990, but in the 21st century, it has constructed only [three](#) reactors, despite [subsidies](#) created in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. Subsidies cannot fix the overregulation driving the lack of new nuclear construction.

President Trump issued four nuclear-related executive orders (EOs) in May 2025. One of them, [EO 14300](#), directs the NRC to conduct a "review and wholesale revision of its regulations and guidance documents." Shortly thereafter, the NRC [approved](#) a commercial nuclear reactor for construction for the first time in almost a decade among other [achievements](#).

Action Items (Congress):

- Congress should [establish](#) a pathway through which nuclear reactors tested or demonstrated under DOE authority may access an expedited NRC commercial licensing process.
- Congress should [codify](#) Executive Order 14300 "Ordering the Reform of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission."
- Congress should **repeal unnecessary rules, including uncontested mandatory hearing requirements, and allow commercial-grade steel and concrete in non-safety-related structures** rather than costlier nuclear-grade materials.

How It Would Make Life More Affordable:

- Nuclear reforms could cut regulatory costs and delays, spurring reliable, carbon-free power for growing household and business electricity demand.

Related Legislation: Build Nuclear with Local Materials Act of 2026 ([S. 4529](#), [H.R. 8812](#)); Efficient Nuclear Licensing Hearings Act ([S. 1757](#), [H.R. 5549](#)); Nuclear Energy Innovation and Deployment Act of 2026 ([S. 4284](#)); Strengthening American Nuclear Energy Act of 2026 ([S. 4267](#)).

BOTTOMLINE: A nuclear renaissance in America is possible not through failed subsidies, but through smart deregulation.