Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act (Pub. Law No. 115-248)

SciPol Summary

The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act (NEICA) is intended to foster the creation of new and advanced nuclear reactor technologies, including new nuclear fission methods, fusion power, and low energy nuclear reactors. Under the law, DOE will create a program to enable testing and demonstration of new reactor concepts that are created and funded by the private sector, but carried out in partnership with DOE and the national laboratories. DOE’s program will facilitate and encourage these demonstration projects by:

- Creating of a versatile reactor-based fast neutron source that will operate as a national user facility to provide fast neutron spectrum irradiation capability. Currently, the only commercially available fast neutron testing facility is in Russia.
- Establishing a high-performance computation modeling and simulation program to advance development of new reactor technologies.
- Allowing demonstration projects to be built at national labs or other DOE owned sites, and working to minimize the time needed to construct them.
- Creating an Advanced Nuclear Energy Cost-Share program, which applicants may use to cover NRC fees required for developing advanced nuclear reactor designs.
The bill is notably bipartisan, sponsored by Senators across the political spectrum [5], from Orrin Hatch (R-UT) to Corey Booker (D-NJ). Organizations representing the nuclear energy industry have welcomed the bill [6], saying it will accelerate the deployment of advanced technology reactors by lowering regulatory costs and burdens, and providing researchers and engineers with real-world tools needed to enable the creation of viable new reactor technology. Organizations concerned with accelerating the de-carbonization of our electric sector have also applauded the bill, stating that it will spur innovation needed to move away from carbon-heavy sources of electricity [7].

SciPol Summary authored by Sarah Rispin Sedlak, J.D. [8]

Related Engagements

October 4, 2018
Contribute to SciPol
Contribute to SciPol

August 16, 2018
Organize A Citizen’s Group
Organize a community group.

August 16, 2018
Consult with NGOs
Consult with think tanks or non-governmental organizations

SEE ALL RELATED ENGAGEMENTS [12]