

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SMITH for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 589, the Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act.

H.R. 589 provides policy direction to the Department of Energy on basic science research and coordination, and implements important reforms to DOE national laboratory management that will modernize the research pipeline.

This legislation gives Congress the opportunity to enact energy research and development policy that prioritizes critical programs at the Department of Energy. From advanced scientific computing to nuclear physics to fusion energy science, focusing on basic research at our national labs provides the best opportunity for U.S. economic growth and technology innovation.

Significant investments, Mr. Speaker, in basic science research by foreign countries like China, as has been alluded to, threatens America's global standing as the leader in scientific knowledge. To maintain our competitive advantage as a world leader in science, we must continue to support the research and research infrastructure that will lead to the next generation of energy technologies.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member JOHNSON and many of my Science Committee colleagues for cosponsoring this very important legislation. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with members of this committee to guide research that will help America compete around the world and be the leader around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 589.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL), who is the vice chairman of the Research and Technology Subcommittee of the Science Committee.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 589, the Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act, sponsored by my friend and the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Representative SMITH.

This bipartisan bill advances basic research and sets explicit science priorities for the Department of Energy, which is critical for our future innovation.

H.R. 589 also authorizes the core program in my bill, the Low-Dose Radiation Research Act, which unanimously passed the House earlier this year.

The provision directs the Department of Energy to carry out a research program on low-dose radiation, which will increase our understanding of the health effects low doses have on biological systems.

Research has consistently shown us the adverse health effects associated with high doses of radiation, but we are a long way from accurately assessing the effects of low doses of radiation.

As a product of industrial activities, medical procedures, and naturally occurring systems, humans are exposed to low doses of radiation every day, and it is imperative we can accurately assess this risk.

There is broad consensus among the radiobiology community that more research is necessary for Federal agencies, physicians, and related experts to advance the use of radiation technologies. We have invaluable diagnostic tools today, such as CT scans, which emit low doses of radiation. It is vital physicians are able to inform patients of the health risks associated with these types of imaging processes.

As a physician in my home State of Kansas, I certainly have firsthand understanding of the crucial importance of verified research and ensuring the best medical outcomes for our patients.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have further speakers, but I will yield to the ranking member if she has any speakers. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I support passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. KNIGHT), who is the vice chairman of the Energy Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act. This bill makes important investments in science and technology research to ensure the United States protects its edge in novel, efficient, and commercially viable energy production.

H.R. 589 makes needed reforms to the national laboratories' relationship with the private sector to streamline the transfer of commercially ready technologies to American businesses.

This will allow the benefits of public investment and critical research to be passed on to American entrepreneurs with greater speed and reinforced economic growth and job creation.

In addition, this bill directs the Department of Energy to establish energy innovation hubs to pull together and create efficiencies in key scientific areas across basic and applied research programs. This bill also includes authorization of the solar fuels initiative, incorporating the text of my bill last Congress, the Solar Fuels Innovation Act.

This provision builds on research that is now being undertaken up and

down the coast of California, from Berkeley to Caltech, to produce fuels from sunlight. The solar fuel process, also known as artificial photosynthesis, converts sunlight into energy to create a range of storable chemical fuels, overcoming the biggest obstacle to maximizing the benefits of renewable technologies.

Basic research and artificial photosynthesis and related efforts could lead to a solar fuel system that consolidates solar power and energy storage in a cohesive process. This would transform the economy in California and the rest of the Nation. The solar fuels initiative would solve the critical challenge posed by wasted renewable energy and enlarge incentives to invest in new solar businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman SMITH and my colleagues who have helped me advance this bill for their foresight in identifying research initiatives that promise new approaches to energy technology that will be good for our economy and our environment.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for his comments and also for his initiatives on the subject of energy in so many ways. Several other bills that we are considering are a result of that initiative.

Mr. Speaker, I have no other requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 589.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION CAPABILITIES ACT OF 2017

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 97) to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions, to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 97

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION CAPABILITIES.

(a) NUCLEAR ENERGY.—Section 951 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 951. NUCLEAR ENERGY.

“(a) MISSION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out programs of civilian nuclear research, development, demonstration, and commercial application, including activities under this subtitle.

“(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The programs carried out under paragraph (1) shall take into consideration the following objectives:

“(A) Providing research infrastructure to promote scientific progress and enable users from academia, the National Laboratories, and the private sector to make scientific discoveries relevant for nuclear, chemical, and materials science engineering.

“(B) Maintaining nuclear energy research and development programs at the National Laboratories and institutions of higher education, including infrastructure at the National Laboratories and institutions of higher education.

“(C) Providing the technical means to reduce the likelihood of nuclear proliferation.

“(D) Increasing confidence margins for public safety of nuclear energy systems.

“(E) Reducing the environmental impact of activities relating to nuclear energy.

“(F) Supporting technology transfer from the National Laboratories to the private sector.

“(G) Enabling the private sector to partner with the National Laboratories to demonstrate novel reactor concepts for the purpose of resolving technical uncertainty associated with the objectives described in subparagraphs (A) through (F).

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this subtitle:

“(1) ADVANCED NUCLEAR REACTOR.—The term ‘advanced nuclear reactor’ means—

“(A) a nuclear fission reactor with significant improvements over the most recent generation of nuclear fission reactors, which may include—

“(i) inherent safety features;

“(ii) lower waste yields;

“(iii) greater fuel utilization;

“(iv) superior reliability;

“(v) resistance to proliferation;

“(vi) increased thermal efficiency; and

“(vii) the ability to integrate into electric and nonelectric applications; or

“(B) a nuclear fusion reactor.

“(2) COMMISSION.—The term ‘Commission’ means the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

“(3) FAST NEUTRON.—The term ‘fast neutron’ means a neutron with kinetic energy above 100 kiloelectron volts.

“(4) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term ‘National Laboratory’ has the meaning given the term in section 2.

“(B) LIMITATION.—With respect to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the Sandia National Laboratories, the term ‘National Laboratory’ means only the civilian activities of the laboratory.

“(5) NEUTRON FLUX.—The term ‘neutron flux’ means the intensity of neutron radiation measured as a rate of flow of neutrons applied over an area.

“(6) NEUTRON SOURCE.—The term ‘neutron source’ means a research machine that provides neutron irradiation services for—

“(A) research on materials sciences and nuclear physics; and

“(B) testing of advanced materials, nuclear fuels, and other related components for reactor systems.”

(b) NUCLEAR ENERGY RESEARCH PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 952 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16272) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (c); and

(B) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 641(b)(1) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16021(b)(1)) is amended by striking “section 942(d)” and inserting “section 952(c)”.

(3) ADVANCED FUEL CYCLE INITIATIVE.—Section 953(a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16273(a)) is amended by striking “, acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology.”

(4) UNIVERSITY NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING SUPPORT.—Section 954(d)(4) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16274(d)(4)) is amended by striking “as part of a taking into consideration effort that emphasizes” and inserting “that emphasize”.

(5) DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY CIVILIAN NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES.—Section 955 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16275) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (c) and (d); and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) VERSATILE NEUTRON SOURCE.—

“(1) MISSION NEED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 31, 2017, the Secretary shall determine the mission need for a versatile reactor-based fast neutron source, which shall operate as a national user facility.

“(B) CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED.—In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consult with the private sector, institutions of higher education, the National Laboratories, and relevant Federal agencies to ensure that the user facility described in subparagraph (A) will meet the research needs of the largest practicable majority of prospective users.

“(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—As soon as practicable after determining the mission need under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a detailed plan for the establishment of the user facility.

“(3) FACILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) CAPABILITIES.—The Secretary shall ensure that the user facility will provide, at a minimum, the following capabilities:

“(i) Fast neutron spectrum irradiation capability.

“(ii) Capacity for upgrades to accommodate new or expanded research needs.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the plan submitted under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall consider the following:

“(i) Capabilities that support experimental high-temperature testing.

“(ii) Providing a source of fast neutrons at a neutron flux, higher than that at which current research facilities operate, sufficient to enable research for an optimal base of prospective users.

“(iii) Maximizing irradiation flexibility and irradiation volume to accommodate as many concurrent users as possible.

“(iv) Capabilities for irradiation with neutrons of a lower energy spectrum.

“(v) Multiple loops for fuels and materials testing in different coolants.

“(vi) Additional pre-irradiation and post-irradiation examination capabilities.

“(vii) Lifetime operating costs and lifecycle costs.

“(4) DEADLINE FOR ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, complete construction of, and approve the start of operations for, the user facility by not later than December 31, 2025.

“(5) REPORTING.—The Secretary shall include in the annual budget request of the Department an explanation for any delay in the progress of the Department in completing the user facility by the deadline described in paragraph (4).

“(6) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall leverage the best practices for management,

construction, and operation of national user facilities from the Office of Science.”

(f) SECURITY OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES.—Section 956 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16276) is amended by striking “, acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology.”

(g) HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.—Section 957 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16277) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 957. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.

“(a) MODELING AND SIMULATION.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to enhance the capabilities of the United States to develop new reactor technologies through high-performance computation modeling and simulation techniques.

“(b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Secretary shall coordinate with relevant Federal agencies as described by the National Strategic Computing Initiative established by Executive Order 13702 (80 Fed. Reg. 46177 (July 29, 2015)), while taking into account the following objectives:

“(1) Using expertise from the private sector, institutions of higher education, and the National Laboratories to develop computational software and capabilities that prospective users may access to accelerate research and development of advanced nuclear reactor systems and reactor systems for space exploration.

“(2) Developing computational tools to simulate and predict nuclear phenomena that may be validated through physical experimentation.

“(3) Increasing the utility of the research infrastructure of the Department by coordinating with the Advanced Scientific Computing Research program within the Office of Science.

“(4) Leveraging experience from the Energy Innovation Hub for Modeling and Simulation.

“(5) Ensuring that new experimental and computational tools are accessible to relevant research communities, including private sector entities engaged in nuclear energy technology development.

(c) SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall consider support for additional research activities to maximize the utility of the research facilities of the Department, including physical processes—

“(1) to simulate degradation of materials and behavior of fuel forms; and

“(2) for validation of computational tools.”

(h) ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.—Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 958. ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.

“(a) NATIONAL REACTOR INNOVATION CENTER.—There is authorized a program to enable the testing and demonstration of reactor concepts to be proposed and funded, in whole or in part, by the private sector.

“(b) TECHNICAL EXPERTISE.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Secretary shall leverage the technical expertise of relevant Federal agencies and the National Laboratories in order to minimize the time required to enable construction and operation of privately funded experimental reactors at National Laboratories or other Department-owned sites.

“(c) OBJECTIVES.—The reactors described in subsection (b) shall operate to meet the following objectives:

“(1) Enabling physical validation of advanced nuclear reactor concepts.

“(2) Resolving technical uncertainty and increasing practical knowledge relevant to

safety, resilience, security, and functionality of advanced nuclear reactor concepts.

“(3) General research and development to improve nascent technologies.

“(d) SHARING TECHNICAL EXPERTISE.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Secretary may enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Chairman of the Commission in order to share technical expertise and knowledge through—

“(1) enabling the testing and demonstration of advanced nuclear reactor concepts to be proposed and funded, in whole or in part, by the private sector;

“(2) operating a database to store and share data and knowledge relevant to nuclear science and engineering between Federal agencies and the private sector;

“(3) developing and testing electric and nonelectric integration and energy conversion systems relevant to advanced nuclear reactors;

“(4) leveraging expertise from the Commission with respect to safety analysis; and

“(5) enabling technical staff of the Commission to actively observe and learn about technologies developed under the program.

“(e) AGENCY COORDINATION.—The Chairman of the Commission and the Secretary shall enter into a memorandum of understanding regarding the following:

“(1) Ensuring that—

“(A) the Department has sufficient technical expertise to support the timely research, development, demonstration, and commercial application by the civilian nuclear industry of safe and innovative advanced nuclear reactor technology; and

“(B) the Commission has sufficient technical expertise to support the evaluation of applications for licenses, permits, and design certifications and other requests for regulatory approval for advanced nuclear reactors.

“(2) The use of computers and software codes to calculate the behavior and performance of advanced nuclear reactors based on mathematical models of the physical behavior of advanced nuclear reactors.

“(3) Ensuring that—

“(A) the Department maintains and develops the facilities necessary to enable the timely research, development, demonstration, and commercial application by the civilian nuclear industry of safe and innovative reactor technology; and

“(B) the Commission has access to the facilities described in subparagraph (A), as needed.

“(f) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2017, the Secretary, in consultation with the National Laboratories, relevant Federal agencies, and other stakeholders, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report assessing the capabilities of the Department to authorize, host, and oversee privately funded experimental advanced nuclear reactors as described in subsection (b).

“(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall address—

“(A) the safety review and oversight capabilities of the Department, including options to leverage expertise from the Commission and the National Laboratories;

“(B) options to regulate privately proposed and funded experimental reactors hosted by the Department;

“(C) potential sites capable of hosting privately funded experimental advanced nuclear reactors;

“(D) the efficacy of the available contractual mechanisms of the Department to partner with the private sector and Federal agencies, including cooperative research and development agreements, strategic partnership

projects, and agreements for commercializing technology;

“(E) the liability of the Federal Government with respect to the disposal of low-level radioactive waste, spent nuclear fuel, or high-level radioactive waste (as those terms are defined in section 2 of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (42 U.S.C. 10101));

“(F) the impact on the aggregate inventory in the United States of low-level radioactive waste, spent nuclear fuel, or high-level radioactive waste (as those terms are defined in section 2 of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (42 U.S.C. 10101));

“(G) potential cost structures relating to physical security, decommissioning, liability, and other long-term project costs; and

“(H) other challenges or considerations identified by the Secretary.

“(3) UPDATES.—Once every 2 years, the Secretary shall update relevant provisions of the report submitted under paragraph (1) and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress the update.

“(g) SAVINGS CLAUSES.—

“(1) LICENSING REQUIREMENT.—Nothing in this section authorizes the Secretary or any person to construct or operate a nuclear reactor for the purpose of demonstrating the suitability for commercial application of the nuclear reactor unless licensed by the Commission in accordance with section 202 of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5842).

“(2) FINANCIAL PROTECTION.—Any activity carried out under this section that involves the risk of public liability shall be subject to the financial protection or indemnification requirements of section 170 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2210) (commonly known as the ‘Price-Anderson Act’).”

(i) BUDGET PLAN.—Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) (as amended by subsection (h)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 959. BUDGET PLAN.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2017, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives 2 alternative 10-year budget plans for civilian nuclear energy research and development by the Secretary, as described in subsections (b) through (d).

“(b) BUDGET PLAN ALTERNATIVE 1.—One of the budget plans submitted under subsection (a) shall assume constant annual funding for 10 years at the appropriated level for the civilian nuclear energy research and development of the Department for fiscal year 2016.

“(c) BUDGET PLAN ALTERNATIVE 2.—One of the budget plans submitted under subsection (a) shall be an unconstrained budget.

“(d) INCLUSIONS.—Each alternative budget plan submitted under subsection (a) shall include—

“(1) a prioritized list of the programs, projects, and activities of the Department to best support the development of advanced nuclear reactor technologies;

“(2) realistic budget requirements for the Department to implement sections 955(c), 957, and 958; and

“(3) the justification of the Department for continuing or terminating existing civilian nuclear energy research and development programs.”

(j) REPORT ON FUSION INNOVATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Rep-

resentatives a report identifying engineering designs for innovative fusion energy systems that have the potential to demonstrate net energy production not later than 15 years after the start of construction.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall identify budgetary requirements that would be necessary for the Department of Energy to carry out a fusion innovation initiative to accelerate research and development of the engineering designs identified in the report.

(k) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for the Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended by striking the item relating to section 957 and inserting the following:

“957. High-performance computation and supportive research.

“958. Enabling nuclear energy innovation.

“959. Budget plan.”

SEC. 3. ADVANCED NUCLEAR ENERGY LICENSING COST-SHARE GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission” means the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

(2) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means the Advanced Nuclear Energy Cost-Share Grant Program established under subsection (b).

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Energy.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish a grant program, to be known as the “Advanced Nuclear Energy Cost-Share Grant Program”, under which the Secretary shall make cost-share grants to applicants for the purpose of funding a portion of the Commission fees of the applicant for pre-application review activities and application review activities.

(c) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary shall seek out technology diversity in making grants under the program.

(d) COST-SHARE AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall determine the cost-share amount for each grant under the program in accordance with section 988 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16352).

(e) USE OF FUNDS.—A recipient of a grant under the program may use the grant funds to cover Commission fees, including those fees associated with—

(1) developing a licensing project plan;

(2) obtaining a statement of licensing feasibility;

(3) reviewing topical reports; and

(4) other—

(A) pre-application review activities;

(B) application review activities; and

(C) interactions with the Commission.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) and the gentleman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 97, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, in support of S. 97, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act. I want to thank Senator CRAPO, Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator MURKOWSKI, and Senator BOOKER,

as well as Ranking Member JOHNSON and Chairman SMITH for cosponsoring this important legislation, and for their years of leadership in advocating for nuclear energy research and development.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside my Senate counterparts to prioritize fundamental research that will support nuclear innovation and keep America safe, independent, and most importantly, globally competitive.

I also want to thank my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee who have worked alongside of me with advancing this legislation.

The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which I introduced in the 114th Congress and the 115th Congress, provides updated statutory direction to the Department of Energy's nuclear research activities to ensure that fundamental research is prioritized and precious resources are not wasted.

Mr. Speaker, this bill lays out a clear set of parameters and a definite timeline for DOE to complete an advanced research reactor facility, which is a crucial part of ensuring innovative materials and nuclear fuels R&D can take place right here in the United States instead of overseas.

While modeling and simulation can accelerate R&D, nuclear energy research must be validated through direct experimentation in the lab. This type of research requires access to a source of fast neutrons, and today, these are only available for civilian research in Russia.

The versatile neutron source authorized in this bill will provide the United States with this vital capability. S. 97 also directs DOE to partner with industry to construct and operate reactor prototypes at DOE national labs.

Mr. Speaker, our national labs provide a very unique environment that safely allows for creative testing and development for advanced nuclear technology without a burdensome regulatory process that can slow progress to a crawl. In order to maintain our nuclear capabilities, the United States must continue developing cutting-edge technology right here at home.

Without the direction provided in this bill, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to rely on foreign research. We will fall further and further behind. We will lose the ability to develop innovative nuclear technology and be left importing next-generation reactor designs from overseas. This is unacceptable.

S. 97 will maintain America's ability to influence security and proliferation standards around the world as more developing nations look to nuclear energy to grow their economies.

The language in this bill is the product of many Science, Space, and Technology Committee engagements with relevant stakeholders and nuclear research and development.

Mr. Speaker, last Congress this language passed the House three times as

a standalone bill, with the House amendment to S. 2012 and in the NDAA, each with overwhelming bipartisan support.

This language also has a history of strong support in the Senate. It passed as an amendment in the Senate during the 114th Congress and again as a standalone bill this Congress.

S. 97 is vital to ensure that this important research and development is carried out. We cannot afford to miss the economic opportunity provided by next-generation nuclear technology.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting S. 97, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support S. 97, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.

It is the Senate companion to H.R. 431, which I am very pleased to cosponsor. Today, nuclear power plays a vital role in providing our country with clean, reliable energy. I happen to be one of those who live in an area where we have nuclear energy.

Looking toward the future, one of my top priorities is preventing and mitigating the potentially devastating impacts of climate change. I believe that this clean energy resource can and should play a key role in our efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of our electricity sector. But there currently are technical, economic, and policy challenges that prevent nuclear energy from playing a larger role in enabling our clean energy future.

The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act takes several positive steps to address these challenges. Implementing the provisions of this bill will help accelerate the development of advanced nuclear energy technologies that are safer, less expensive, more efficient, and produce less waste than the current generation of nuclear reactors.

I hope it will also help ensure a brighter future for the U.S. nuclear energy industry. I would like to express my appreciation for the process we followed to put this bill together. Majority and minority staff in both the House and Senate worked closely together, from engaging stakeholders, through crafting and incorporating suggested changes to the bill language.

This is a great example of what we can achieve when we leave politics at the door and look for common ground to address challenges facing our Nation's research enterprise.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the great gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, S. 97, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, directs the Department of Energy to en-

able the American nuclear power industry to conduct civilian nuclear energy research and development that will advance our leadership in nuclear technology.

While we are considering the Senate version of this bill today, I would like to credit the author of the original legislation, Energy Subcommittee Chairman RANDY WEBER, his primary cosponsors, and Science, Space, and Technology Committee Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON for their years of leadership on this issue.

The originating Science, Space, and Technology Committee legislation was developed over 4 years of collaboration, including hearings, coordination with DOE and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and countless meetings with stakeholders. Every effort has been made to ensure this legislation will provide the resources necessary to more effectively and efficiently develop the next generation of nuclear power.

Advanced nuclear energy technology is the best way to make reliable, safe, and emission-free electricity available throughout the modern and developing world. The legislation authorizes the research facilities and infrastructure necessary to help development of new, advanced nuclear reactors here at home, maintaining American leadership in the global nuclear technology sector.

This technological edge allows us to better influence global nonproliferation standards and prevent civilian nuclear energy technology from being misused for weapons development overseas. S. 97 directs DOE to develop plans for long-term research and authorizes critical infrastructure at the DOE national labs. This includes leveraging DOE state-of-the-art super computers to accelerate the theoretical development of advanced reactors.

The bill also authorizes construction of a research reactor at a DOE site. This research reactor will provide access to the fast neutrons necessary to develop advanced nuclear reactors. By investing in research infrastructure, DOE can maximize the impact of Federal research dollars and facilitate the development of a wide variety of nuclear technologies.

Finally, S. 97 creates a reliable mechanism for the private sector to partner with DOE labs to build DOE-certified prototype reactors at DOE sites. While the Science, Space, and Technology Committee has heard from dozens of companies with innovative reactor designs, the ability to move new nuclear technology to the market has been stalled by government approval and licensing red tape.

S. 97 provides an alternative pathway for these nuclear entrepreneurs. The safe development of advanced nuclear technology at DOE sites will provide access to DOE resources and expertise, and fast track the commercial regulatory process by involving nuclear reactors at the earliest stages of prototype design and construction.

Nuclear power has been a proven source of safe and emission-free electricity for over half a century. By enacting this legislation and investing in the capabilities needed by the private sector to develop advanced reactors, we can build on the history of American leadership in nuclear power and reduce emissions around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman WEBER and Ranking Member JOHNSON for their work on this bill, as well as our Senate colleagues, including Senator MIKE CRAPO, Senator JIM RISCH, Senator LISA MURKOWSKI, Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, and Senator CORY BOOKER for leading the effort to pass this bill through the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues to support and clear this legislation for President Trump's approval.

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Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

S. 97 is vital to ensuring America's leadership in nuclear research and development. By harnessing the expertise and unique capabilities of our Nation's national labs, universities, and entrepreneurs, American industry can take the lead in developing groundbreaking advanced nuclear technology for the next generation.

I especially thank my colleagues in the Senate and on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee who have worked hard to get this legislation passed: Senators CRAPO, WHITEHOUSE, MURKOWSKI, and BOOKER, and, of course, Ranking Member JOHNSON and Chairman SMITH, as well as my other colleagues. I also thank the dozens of researchers and stakeholders who provided critical feedback over the past several years as we have been developing this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this commonsense, bipartisan legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 97.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 5895, ENERGY AND WATER, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, AND MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1059, I call up the conference report on the

bill (H.R. 5895) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1059, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of September 10, 2018, at page H7946.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present the conference report for H.R. 5895.

This conference report includes the Energy and Water Development, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Legislative Branch Appropriations bills for fiscal year 2019. It is a product of months of negotiations between the House and the Senate.

This conference report is a responsible compromise that addresses shared priorities: funding for programs that benefit all Americans, including national security, energy development programs and water resources infrastructure, care for veterans, and operations of the legislative branch. Critically, this conference report represents the next step toward fully funding the Federal Government for fiscal year 2019.

This is the first time since fiscal year 2017 that Congress will have passed any Appropriations bill before the end of the year and the first time in over a decade—since fiscal year 2007—that Congress will be sending more than one Appropriations bill to the President's desk before September 30.

We have done our best to repair a broken appropriations process. This is a welcome and long overdue return to regular order and fulfills our promise to the American people to deliver results.

Passage of this legislation also provides certainty to the Federal Government—most importantly, for our troops and their families, who rely on military infrastructure to sustain their quality of life and accomplish their missions, and for our veterans, who deserve full access to their benefits and healthcare.

It is my sincere hope that we will continue this progress with the consideration of additional conference reports.

The Energy and Water portion of the report provides \$44.6 billion for Department of Energy, Army Corps of Engineers, and the Department of Defense's nuclear programs.

Investments in national security programs help our Nation maintain its

strongest possible nuclear deterrence posture, support our Navy's nuclear-powered fleet, and keep nuclear materials out of the hands of terrorists.

And the bill also targets an array of energy programs that support our goal of energy independence and directs much-needed funds to water resources infrastructure across the country.

The Military Construction and Veterans Affairs portion of the report totals \$98 billion in discretionary funding. This includes the largest dollar amount ever for the Department of Veterans Affairs, \$86.5 billion, a substantial investment that will improve access to and quality of care for veterans.

Importantly, this also includes additional funding for the VA MISSION Act and will support ongoing care for our veterans through community care centers, caregivers, and other medical services. This funding is provided within the existing discretionary spending caps.

Also, the bill provides strong investments for our defense infrastructure and military installations. This will support the rebuilding of our Armed Forces, help counter threats and aggression abroad, and support our troops and military families.

The third portion of this conference report includes the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill. This legislation continues the operations of Congress and its support agencies, ensuring that Members of Congress are best able to serve the American people.

Within the total of \$4.8 billion, provided for both the House and the Senate, funding is prioritized for security and safety within the Capitol complex, including increases for the Capitol Police.

The legislation helps the legislative branch improve its functions. Of note, for the first time, we have included dedicated funding for paid internships, which will allow more young Americans and students from all backgrounds to serve Congress.

I want to express my deep gratitude to the chairs and ranking members of the three subcommittees who spearheaded this legislation—Energy and Water Chairman SIMPSON of Idaho and Ranking Member KAPTUR of Ohio; Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Chairman CARTER of Texas and Ranking Member WASSERMAN SCHULTZ of Florida; and Legislative Branch Chairman FORTENBERRY of Nebraska and Ranking Member RYAN of Ohio—along with all our conferees.

I also want to especially thank Ranking Member LOWEY for her service, support, and friendship throughout many years on the Appropriations Committee.

Lastly, I would like to thank our committee's hardworking professional and associate staff. Over the past months, they have been working without a break to complete negotiations and get this conference report and other reports to the floor. They are a