

USNIC NEWS

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Statement by the U.S. Nuclear Infrastructure Council

*Regarding the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) approval today of a
Final Rule on continued spent fuel storage and the ending of the suspension
of final licensing actions for nuclear plants and renewals*

The Commission's companion actions approving a revamped continued storage rule and lifting the two-year moratorium on final licensing actions are both prudent and encouraging.

The NRC is to be applauded for moving with seriousness of purpose and focused dispatch in prosecuting an on-schedule solution to the Waste Confidence remand challenge poised 24 months ago by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

We are particularly pleased that today's action paves the way for an end to the licensing impasse that posed a potential bottleneck for up to two dozen actions including a new reactor projected to debut in 2015 and key license renewals.

Among other things, we agree with the affirmation that continued safe storage of spent fuel in pools and dry casks is technically feasible and without significant environmental effects for time frames beyond the licensed reactor lifetimes, including indefinite storage.

This two-year licensing hiatus underscores the importance of continued progress on the backend of the fuel cycle to maintaining the current operating fleet and the development of new nuclear energy plants, especially in light of the U.S. Department of Energy's continued inaction which was the genesis of this challenge.

To this end, It remains our hope that the DOE will work with alacrity to invigorate the Nation's nuclear waste management program by re-standing up a permanent organization, getting on with successfully consummating the court-ordered licensing of Yucca Mountain, which is expected to result in favorable safety evaluation reports in 2015 – and requesting additional funding to go further while working with Congress to enact organizational and funding improvements to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

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***Note:** While the above statement reflects the consensus views of the Council, it does not necessarily reflect the specific views of individual members.*

About NIC: *The United States Nuclear Infrastructure Council (www.usnic.org) is the leading U.S. business consortium advocate for new nuclear and engagement of the American supply chain globally. Composed of over 50 companies NIC represents the "Who's Who" of the key nuclear mover and supply chain community.*