

July 1, 2021

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to you concerning the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Following the completion of Commissioner Annie Caputo's term on June 30, 2021, there are now two open seats on the Commission. On behalf of the 10,000 members of the American Nuclear Society (ANS), I request that you act expeditiously to nominate qualified nuclear professionals to fill the open seats and restore the Commission to its full complement of commissioners.

The Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 established a five-person Commission to run the NRC, which serves the vital role of ensuring the protection of public health and safety while enabling the country to realize the many benefits of nuclear technology. As ANS points out in Position Statement 77 "The Nuclear Regulatory Commission,"¹ it is important that the Commission operate with its full complement of five members so that it can act "... as a collegial body of individuals with diverse and complementary abilities and backgrounds."

The background, experience, and qualifications of the next commissioner nominees is also a matter of importance to ANS. The NRC is a regulatory agency, and for most of its history it operated largely outside of the political spotlight. Traditionally, most commissioners had technical educations and backgrounds, in keeping with their responsibility for overseeing a highly technical field. In Position Statement 77 ANS states, "It is not essential that all Commissioners be scientists or engineers, but the nature of Commission responsibilities makes a technical background a highly desirable trait." However, with Ms. Caputo's departure from the Commission, it has no remaining members with a strong technical foundation. ANS believes the Commission should be well-rounded in terms of education and experience. To restore the needed balance, the White House should seek nominees who are scientists or engineers with significant, recognized accomplishments in their field. Fortunately, the nation has many such qualified candidates, including Ms. Caputo.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this input. We recognize the challenges the White House faces in nominating the right candidates for important federal positions like NRC

¹ Position Statement 77, "The Nuclear Regulatory Commission," June 2016. See https://cdn.ans.org/policy/statements/docs/ps77.pdf?_ga=2.221576221.449559500.1624705505-1563510486.1616634348.

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Commissioner. ANS stands ready to assist in any way it can. If you have any questions, please contact ANS Director of Public Policy, John Starkey at 907-360-2446.

Sincerely,

Steven P. Nesbit
President
American Nuclear Society

Craig H. Piercy
Executive Director/CEO
American Nuclear Society

cc: Senator Chuck Schumer
cc: Senator Mitch McConnell
cc: Senator Tom Carper
cc: Senator Shelley Moore Capito