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January 4, 2016

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman
United States House of Representatives
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith:

It has come to my attention that the Committee is considering legislation that aims to enhance research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science. I write to applaud this effort and the overall goals of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.

As noted in recent testimony before your committee by Dr. Dale Klein, U. T. System Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, the challenges faced by the increasing urbanization of the developing world are resident in the fact that there are nearly two billion people who still lack basic access to electricity, and many more whose current access is unreliable. As attempts to address this infrastructure shortfall continue to present unique technological and sustainability challenges, our nation must encourage the expansion of energy knowledge and research across all fields of the energy sector.

H.R. 4084 is an important first step toward aligning federal nuclear policies with today's realities, and if enacted, should create a more collaborative relationship among government, research institutions, and private sector to advance nuclear science and promote innovation. I believe H.R. 4084 strikes the right balance between government encouragement, public research, and private sector innovation.

Thank you for the consideration you and your colleagues are giving to this important topic and to the promotion of basic and applied research of all disciplines.

Sincerely,

William H. McRaven
Chancellor

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