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For Immediate Release

DOE Awards Propel U.S. Leadership in Nuclear Energy

Domestic HALEU Supply Key to National Security and Advanced Reactor Deployment

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Yesterday, the **U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced** four recipients for uranium enrichment services aimed at establishing a domestic supply chain of high-assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU), essential for deploying advanced nuclear reactors.

The Nuclear Energy and National Security Coalition (NENSC) Co-Chair and **former DOE Deputy Secretary Daniel Poneman** emphasized the urgency of this move, stating, "Ensuring a domestic supply of enriched uranium for advanced nuclear reactors is a national security priority. It is crucial that the U.S. government act swiftly to deploy capital supporting domestic uranium enrichment capabilities. The U.S. once led global exports but, over decades, allowed leadership to shift overseas. Today, Russia controls 44% of global enrichment capacity."

Adm. Richard W. Mies, fellow NENSC Co-Chair and USN (Ret.) noted, "The war in Ukraine underscored the seriousness of this situation. It is overdue for correction, and today's selection of enrichment awardees, along with last week's deconversion awardees, represents an important first step."

Sustaining a resilient domestic nuclear energy supply chain is central to NENSC's mission. Uranium enrichment is vital to the nation's energy security, with nuclear power providing 20% of U.S. electricity and 50% of its clean energy.

In recent weeks, major tech companies like Google, Amazon, and Microsoft have announced plans to use zero-carbon, always-on nuclear power for their data centers. Two of the reactor designs, Kairos Power's fluoride-salt-cooled reactor and X-energy's helium-cooled Xe-100, depend on HALEU, making the DOE's awards crucial for these projects.

Notably, nine out of ten recipients of the DOE's Advanced Reactor Demonstration Program awards, including TerraPower—the only advanced reactor project with construction underway—rely on HALEU. This funding is critical to ensure that these and other U.S. reactor projects have the necessary fuel to proceed and maintain U.S. leadership in the global nuclear energy sector.

Globally, there is rising demand for small and advanced nuclear reactors, with more than 30 nations exploring nuclear energy for the first time due to the simplicity and scalability of these designs. The U.S. is striving to maintain leadership in nuclear safety, security, and nonproliferation, which is critical as these international nuclear markets grow. A strong domestic fuel supply, especially for advanced fuels like HALEU, is essential for U.S. competitiveness. Securing a steady HALEU supply supports reactor deployment abroad and strengthens the U.S. role in shaping global nuclear standards.

Adm. Mies further explained, "Expanding domestic-origin enrichment capacity directly serves U.S. national security by enabling the supply of highly enriched uranium (HEU) for naval reactors and tritium for our nuclear weapons."

The U.S. Congress passed three pivotal bills to make today's announcement on HALEU supply possible. The Nuclear Fuel Security Act established a framework for bolstering the domestic production of nuclear fuel, ensuring the availability of advanced fuels like HALEU. The Prohibiting Russian Uranium Imports Act further strengthened this effort by banning uranium imports from Russia, a major global supplier, to reduce U.S. reliance on foreign sources. Lastly, the FY24 Appropriations Bill allocated $2.7 billion for both high-assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU) and low-enriched uranium (LEU) production, securing funding necessary to accelerate domestic enrichment capabilities and support next-generation reactor deployment.

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The Nuclear Energy and National Security Coalition (NENSC) is an independent organization of leading national security experts dedicated to leveraging U.S. nuclear energy to advance U.S. national security interests. NENSC is dedicated to expanding recognition of this interdependence among policymakers at all levels and promoting policies that ensure a robust U.S. nuclear energy enterprise.

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