



February 2025

In our latest edition of NENSC News, the [Nuclear Energy and National Security Coalition \(NENSC\)](#) brings you the latest industry news, events you don't want to miss, and policies we are watching. Be sure to keep scrolling to learn how you can follow us and stay up to date with the latest information you need.

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## U.S. LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY DEVELOPMENTS

### *Presidential Cabinet Confirmations and Nominations*

**Senate Moves Quickly to Confirm Trump Cabinet Confirmations.** Since January 20<sup>th</sup>, many of President Trump's cabinet officials who will be engaged on nuclear energy and national security matters have been confirmed.

<i>Date/Vote Count</i>	<i>Official</i>	<i>Position</i>
January 20, 2025 Vote Count: 99-0	Marco Rubio	U.S. Secretary of State
Jan 24, 2025 Vote Count: 51-50	Pete Hegseth	U.S. Secretary of Defense
Jan 30, 2025 Vote Count: 80-17	Doug Burgum	U.S. Secretary of the Interior
Feb 3, 2025 Vote Count: 59-30	Chris Wright	U.S. Secretary of Energy
Feb 12, 2025 Vote Count: 52-48	Tulsi Gabbard	U.S. Director of National Intelligence
Feb 18, 2025 Vote Count: 51-45	Howard Lutnick	U.S. Secretary of Commerce

**Administration Announces Nominations for Civilian Nuclear Energy Policy.** Nominations have been announced for a number of significant positions in the federal government that directly engage in civilian nuclear energy policy.

<i>Nominee</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Jeffery Kessler	Under Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Security	U.S. Department of Commerce
William Kimmitt	Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade	U.S. Department of Commerce
Tristan Abbey	Administrator of the Energy Information Administration	U.S. Department of Energy
David Eisner	Assistant Secretary of International Affairs	U.S. Department of Energy
Ted Garrish	Assistant Secretary of Nuclear Energy	U.S. Department of Energy
Kyle Haustveit	Assistant Secretary of Fossil Energy	U.S. Department of Energy
Matthew Napoli	Deputy Administrator of Nuclear Nonproliferation, NNSA	U.S. Department of Energy
Scott Pappano	Principal Deputy Administrator, NNSA	U.S. Department of Energy
Tina Price	Chief Financial Officer	U.S. Department of Energy
Conner Prochaska	Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy	U.S. Department of Energy
Audrey Robertson	Assistant Secretary of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy	U.S. Department of Energy

## *Other Domestic Developments*

### **Executive Branch**

**National Energy Dominance Council Established:** President Trump [signed an Executive Order](#) to establish the National Energy Dominance Council as an entity within the Executive Office of the President, reporting to the Chief of Staff. The Council will be chaired by Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, vice-chaired by the Energy Secretary Chris Wright, and composed of members of President Trump's cabinet and key government agencies. The Council will advise the President on strategies to achieve energy dominance by improving the processes for permitting, production, generation, distribution, regulation, and transportation across all forms of American energy. For civilian nuclear, the Executive Order specifically calls out uranium as a "national asset," and it requires the Council to advise the President on how to bring small modular reactors online. A fact sheet on the Council can be [read here](#).

**Wright Issues Secretarial Order on Energy Dominance:** Secretary of Energy Chris Wright signed a Secretarial Order to implement President Trump's energy policies, aiming to expand domestic energy production and reduce regulatory barriers. For civilian nuclear power, the order prioritizes the need to "unleash commercial nuclear power in the United States." The entire Secretarial Order can be [read here](#).

**Trump and Modi Discuss Nuclear Cooperation:** President Trump hosted the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi for an Official Working Visit in Washington, DC on February 13, 2025. A joint statement [was released](#), which emphasized their commitment to advancing civil nuclear cooperation between the United States and India. They announced plans to fully implement the U.S.-India 123 Civil Nuclear Agreement by constructing U.S.-designed nuclear

reactors in India, focusing on large-scale localization and potential technology transfer. To facilitate this collaboration, India intends to amend its Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLNDA), addressing civil liability concerns and enabling partnerships between Indian and U.S. industries in nuclear reactor production and deployment.

**U.S. and El Salvador Sign Nuclear Cooperation Agreement:** Secretary of State Marco Rubio and El Salvador's Foreign Minister Alexandra Hill Tinoco [signed a Memorandum of Understanding \(NCMOU\)](#) to advance peaceful civil nuclear cooperation. The agreement aims to enhance energy security, strengthen economic ties, and uphold nuclear safety and nonproliferation standards. This step builds on the longstanding U.S.-El Salvador partnership in security, energy, and commerce, laying the groundwork for future collaboration in nuclear technology and industry.

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## INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENTS

**Ukraine Approves Purchase of Russian-Made Nuclear Reactors:** Ukraine's parliament has [approved the purchase of two Russian-made VVER-1000 reactors](#) from Bulgaria for \$600 million to expand the Khmelnytskyi Nuclear Power Plant, despite criticism that they are outdated and costly. President Volodymyr Zelensky pushed for the deal, calling it vital for energy independence as Russian attacks continue to damage Ukraine's power grid. The reactors will help compensate for the loss of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, currently under Russian occupation.

**South Africa Considers Nuclear Deals with Iran and Russia:** South Africa is [open to collaborating with Iran or Russia](#) to expand its nuclear energy capacity, according to Minister Gwede Mantashe. This move could strain relations with the U.S., which recently reduced foreign aid to South Africa over policy disagreements. South Africa aims to add 2,500 MW of new nuclear power to address its severe energy crisis, marked by frequent blackouts and significant economic losses.

**UK Government Fast-Tracks Nuclear Power Expansion:** The UK government has [announced major reforms](#) to accelerate nuclear power development across England and Wales. As part of Prime Minister Keir Starmer's "Plan for Change," the new policies will streamline regulations, encourage investment, and allow for the construction of SMRs for the first time. Key changes include scrapping outdated restrictions limiting nuclear projects to eight sites, removing expiration dates on nuclear planning rules, and establishing a Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce to speed up approvals. These measures aim to boost energy security, create thousands of skilled jobs, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Energy Secretary Ed Miliband emphasized the government's commitment to ["build, build, build"](#) clean energy infrastructure, ensuring affordable, homegrown power while strengthening the UK's position in the global nuclear industry.

**Southeast Asia Eyes Nuclear for Energy Transition:** Southeast Asian nations are [increasingly exploring nuclear power](#) to meet growing energy demands and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Indonesia plans 20 nuclear plants, the Philippines is assessing reviving its Bataan facility, and Vietnam has renewed its nuclear ambitions. Malaysia, Singapore, and others are

also showing interest.

**South Korea Boosts Nuclear Industry with \$100M Support Fund:** The South Korean government will [provide over \\$100 million in financial support in 2025](#) to strengthen its nuclear power industry, aiming to boost reactor exports and develop an indigenous SMR design. The funding, administered through commercial banks, offers low-interest loans to selected companies. The initiative follows President Yoon Suk Yeol's reversal of his predecessor's nuclear phase-out policy, with a goal of maintaining nuclear power at 30% of the energy mix and exporting 10 reactors by 2030.

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## IN THE NEWS

**AP:** [India Wants to Embrace Nuclear Power. To do it, it'll Need a Lot of Time and Money](#)

**Atlantic Council:** [Nuclear Power is 'Making a Comeback' Around the World, Says IEA Executive Director](#)

**CalMatters:** [Artificial Intelligence is Bringing Nuclear Power Back from the Dead — Maybe Even in California](#)

**CNBC:** [Trump to Help Spark a Nuclear Energy 'Renaissance,' Investor Says](#)

**Eat More Electrons:** [Russia is Racing Ahead of the US on Nuclear Diplomacy](#)

**MDPI:** [Economic Competitiveness of Small Modular Reactors in a Net Zero Policy](#)

**National Academies:** [Pathways for New Nuclear Development](#) *[Workshop materials]*

**National Academies:** [Exploring the New Nuclear Energy Landscape](#)

**NEA:** [Unlocking the Hidden Value of Nuclear Fuel: The Societal Benefits of Diverse Material Recycling](#)

**Raw Story:** [Nuclear Fusion May be a Clean Energy Source – Engineering Challenges Stand in the Way](#)

**Research and Markets:** [Asia-Pacific Small Modular Reactor Market - Analysis and Forecast, 2023-2033](#)

**Science Direct: Patents for Power:** [Intellectual Property and the Geopolitics of Nuclear Energy Technologies](#)

**Science Direct:** [Small Modular Reactor Reinforcement Learning Framework: Automating Reactor Core Startup](#)

**The National Interest:** [Pumping Up America's Nuclear Power Politics](#)

**World Nuclear News:** [Ten-State Coalition Aims to Accelerate Advanced Nuclear](#)

**World Nuclear News:** [Japan Aims for Increased Use of Nuclear in Latest Energy Plan](#)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS



### **NRC's 37th Annual Regulatory Information Conference**

March 11-13, 2025  
Rockville, MD

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