my good friend and a member of the committee.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act, and I thank the chairman and ranking member for their fine work.

The bill contains a bipartisan provision which I had the honor of working on with my friend and colleague from Florida, Congressman DAN WEBSTER.

As Floridians, we know hurricanes. In 2004 and 2005, Charley, Frances, Jeanne, Wilma, and Katrina tore through our State, leaving families stranded and property damaged. Trees crashed to the ground, ripping power lines and blocking flooded streets. Water systems were compromised.

Our local governments did a miraculous job cleaning debris from public ways, fixing broken infrastructure, and getting life back to normal. It takes a lot to get this done.

When hurricanes strike, communities are ravaged and so are their budgets. So I want to thank FEMA for the funding assistance it provided Florida at a time of great stress and need.

Now FEMA is asking some of our cities and counties to pay back money that they were given for disaster relief projects that were approved more than 10 years ago.

But here is the thing. There is no question that FEMA should do responsible audits of its relief payments to make sure that money was used properly. But unless there is fraud, the process should not be an endless journey into the Federal bureaucracy.

Our local governments, unlike the Federal Government, have to balance their budgets. They can't afford to wait 5, 10, or an infinite number of years for FEMA to do its assessment, especially when millions of dollars are at stake.

Simply said, the current practice unfairly stymies our local governments' ability to plan their future budgets. This legislation will make sure that the process is more balanced, giving FEMA adequate time to review its grant payments while allowing for financial security to local governments.

I urge my colleagues to support this very good legislation.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), who spent a lot of time and worked very hard to make this bill better.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the reality, as the gentleman from Indiana noted earlier, is that we are going to have disasters and we are going to spend funds responding to those disasters.

The problem with the United States disaster management policy is that it is backward. It is entirely reactive. Rather than going in before a disaster happens and making areas more resilient, making our ecosytem more resilient, making our economy more resilient, we are dead set on this process of coming in after disasters and spending exponentially more dollars.

The ranking member referenced a few figures a little while ago. He referenced a figure of a CBO study indicating that, for every $1 we invest in the right type of hazard mitigation, we save $3 in disaster response cost.

There was another study that FEMA did. For every $1 we invest, we have $4 in cost savings. I think, Mr. Speaker, with the right criteria, you actually even save more.

Now, we are challenged as a Nation right now because the agency that is primarily responsible for making our communities more resilient is the U.S. Army Corps Engineers, which, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, is stuck on stupid.

What we have seen over the last several years is, rather than trying to fix that, we have seen other agencies coming up being granting agencies. We have seen FEMA. This year we have seen the Department of the Interior in the President's budget. In the recent years, we have seen HUD.

Rather than fixing the problem, we are just trying to go around it and put more granting agencies out there. It is creating a disparate approach, an approach that is not coordinated and an approach that is going to result in more taxpayers' funds being spent on the wrong projects, the wrong priorities, rather than being proactive. This bill addresses that, Mr. Speaker.

This bill actually incudes a provision that has FEMA begin developing a coordinated, proactive approach to how we mitigate or reduce vulnerabilities from disasters.

In the last several years, in my home State of Louisiana, we have seen extraordinary disasters, whether it is Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 or Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008.

We had the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2011. In 2012, we had Hurricane Isaac. In 2011 and again this year, we saw record-high water on the Mississippi River system causing flooding.

We are going to spend dollars. We have got to spend them in the right and principled places.

This bill does a number of things that are important. Number one, it eliminates bureaucracy and helps to streamline the process of getting dollars on the ground to some of our important impacted areas.

We have seen where this bill comes in and it actually changes criteria, where severely impacted local communities, like in Louisiana, where we just saw St. John Parish, Ascension Parish, Livingston Parish, the area of Kenner, and St. James Parish experience extraordinary impacts from tornadoes. Those areas actually could potentially qualify for Federal disaster because of the severe impacts in some of these limited areas.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member and the chairman for working with us on a provision that prevents FEMA from being able to move the goalpost on us, being able to come and change conditions after a grant is made that could result in homeowners having to pay back absurd amounts of money when they followed the criteria and followed the commitments when they entered into these grant agreements.

Mr. Speaker, this bill goes a long way. I want to continue working with the leaders of this bill on these zones, on duplication of efforts, and other things. But I will say it again, Mr. Speaker: we are going to spend the money one way or another. We need to spend it in a principled manner.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend my colleagues for passing H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015. This important legislation authorizes appropriations for the Federal Emergency Management Agency for FY2016–FY2018 for management and administration. It also, directs FEMA, through the National Advisory Council, to undertake and report on a comprehensive study of disaster costs and losses.

H.R. 1471 includes provisions that I introduced that extends the authority of FEMA's Administrator to waive debts associated with an overpayment of individual assistance, so long as the overpayment was not a result of fraud.

This issue received national attention when about 30 residents at the Belle Harbor Manor, an assisted living facility in my district, received collection notices related to assistance provided by FEMA in the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy. FEMA's Administrator, Craig Fugate, later cancelled their debts. However, he is limited in canceling the debts of others who are in the exact same situation.

H.R. 1471 fixes this and provides FEMA's Administrator with expanded authority to waive debts of thousands of Super Storm Sandy survivors, as well as the debts incurred as a result of future natural disasters.

I want to thank my colleagues, Representative LOU BARLETTA and Representative PETER DEFAZIO, for their assistance in developing this language. I would also like to thank New York State Assemblyman Phillip Goldfeder for his tireless advocacy on behalf of Super Storm Sandy victims. It is my hope that this measure will receive speedy passage in the Senate so it can be signed by President Obama, and survivors of Super Storm Sandy can finally recover for this horrific act of God.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1471, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION CAPABILITIES ACT

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 4084) to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4084

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act''.

SEC. 2. NUCLEAR ENERGY.

Section 951 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 951. NUCLEAR ENERGY.

''(a) MISSION.—The Secretary shall conduct programs of civilian nuclear research, development, demonstration, and commercial application, including activities in this subtitle. Such programs shall take into consideration the following objectives:

''(1) Providing research infrastructure to promote scientific progress and enable users from academia, the National Laboratories, and the private sector to make scientific discoveries relevant for nuclear, chemical, and materials science engineering.

''(2) Maintaining National Laboratory and university nuclear energy research and development programs, including their infrastructure.

''(3) Providing the technical means to reduce the likelihood of nuclear weapons proliferation and increasing confidence margins for public safety of nuclear energy systems.

''(4) Reducing the environmental impact of nuclear energy related activities.

''(5) Supporting technology transfer from the National Laboratories to the private sector.

''(6) Enabling the private sector to partner with the National Laboratories to demonstrate novel reactor concepts for the purpose of resolving technical uncertainty associated with the aforementioned objectives in this subsection.

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this subtitle:

''(1) ADVANCED FISSION REACTOR.—The term 'advanced fission reactor' means a nuclear fission reactor with significant improvements over the most recent generation of nuclear reactors, which may include inherent safety features, lower waste yields, greater fuel utilization, superior reliability, resistance to proliferation, and increased thermal efficiency.

''(2) FAST NEUTRON.—The term 'fast neutron' means a neutron with kinetic energy above 100 kiloelectron volts.

''(3) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—The term 'National Laboratory' has the meaning given that term in paragraph (3) of section 2, except that with respect to subparagraphs (G), (H), and (N) of such paragraph, for purposes of this subtitle the term includes only the civilian activities thereof.

''(4) NEUTRON FLUX.—The term 'neutron flux' means the intensity of neutron radiation measured as a rate of flow of neutrons applied over an area.

''(5) NEUTRON SOURCE.—The term 'neutron source' means a research machine that provides neutron irradiation services for research on materials sciences and nuclear physics as well as testing of advanced materials, nuclear fuels, and other related components for reactor systems.

''(c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that nuclear energy, through fission or fusion, represents the highest energy density of any known attainable source and yields zero air emissions. This energy source is of national importance to scientific progress, national security, electricity generation, heat generation for industrial applications, and space exploration. Considering the inherent complexity and regulatory burden associated with this area of science, the Department should focus its civilian nuclear research and development activities towards programs that enable the private sector, National Laboratories, and universities to carry out such experiments as are necessary to promote scientific progress and enhance practical knowledge of nuclear engineering.''.

SEC. 3. NUCLEAR ENERGY RESEARCH PROGRAMS.

Section 952 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16272) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (c); and

(2) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively.

SEC. 4. ADVANCED FUEL CYCLE INITIATIVE.

Section 953(a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16273(a)) is amended by striking '', acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology,''.

SEC. 5. UNIVERSITY NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING SUPPORT.

Section 954(d)(4) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16274(d)(4)) is amended by striking ''as part of a taking into consideration effort that emphasizes'' and inserting ''that emphasize''.

SEC. 6. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY CIVILIAN NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES.

Section 955 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16275) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (c) and (d); and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(c) VERSATILE NEUTRON SOURCE.—

''(1) MISSION NEED.—Not later than December 31, 2016, the Secretary shall determine the mission need for a versatile reactor-based fast neutron source, which shall operate as a national user facility. During this process, the Secretary shall consult with the private sector, universities, National Laboratories, and relevant Federal agencies to ensure that this user facility will meet the research needs of the largest possible majority of prospective users.

''(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—Upon the determination of mission need made under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall, as expeditiously as possible, provide to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a detailed plan for the establishment of the user facility.

''(3) FACILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) CAPABILITIES.—The Secretary shall ensure that this user facility will provide, at a minimum, the following capabilities:

''(i) Fast neutron spectrum irradiation capability.

''(ii) Capacity for upgrades to accommodate new or expanded research needs.

''(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the plan provided under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall consider the following:

''(i) Capabilities that support experimental high-temperature testing.

''(ii) Providing a source of fast neutrons at a neutron flux, higher than that at which current research facilities operate, sufficient to enable research for an optimal base of prospective users.

''(iii) Maximizing irradiation flexibility and irradiation volume to accommodate as many concurrent users as possible.

''(iv) Capabilities for irradiation with neutrons of a lower energy spectrum.

''(v) Multiple loops for fuels and materials testing in different coolants.

''(vi) Additional pre-irradiation and post-irradiation examination capabilities.

''(vii) Lifetime operating costs and lifecycle costs.

''(4) REPORTING PROGRESS.—The Department shall, in its annual budget requests, provide an explanation for any delay in its progress and otherwise make every effort to complete construction and approve the start of operations for this facility by December 31, 2025.

''(5) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall leverage the best practices for management, construction, and operation of national user facilities from the Office of Science.''.

SEC. 7. SECURITY OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES.

Section 956 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16276) is amended by striking '', acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology,''.

SEC. 8. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.

Section 957 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16277) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 957. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.

''(a) MODELING AND SIMULATION.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to enhance the Nation's capabilities to develop new reactor technologies through high-performance computation modeling and simulation techniques. This program shall coordinate with relevant Federal agencies through the National Strategic Computing Initiative created under Executive Order 13702 (July 29, 2015) while taking into account the following objectives:

''(1) Utilizing expertise from the private sector, universities, and National Laboratories to develop computational software and capabilities that prospective users may access to accelerate research and development of advanced fission reactor systems, nuclear fusion systems, and reactor systems for space exploration.

''(2) Developing computational tools to simulate and predict nuclear phenomena that may be validated through physical experimentation.

''(3) Increasing the utility of the Department's research infrastructure by coordinating with the Advanced Scientific Computing Research program within the Office of Science.

''(4) Leveraging experience from the Energy Innovation Hub for Modeling and Simulation.

''(5) Ensuring that new experimental and computational tools are accessible to relevant research communities.

''(b) SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall consider support for additional research activities to maximize the utility of its research facilities, including physical processes to simulate degradation of materials and behavior of fuel forms and for validation of computational tools.''.

SEC. 9. ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.

Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 958. ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.

''(a) NATIONAL REACTOR INNOVATION CENTER.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to enable the testing and demonstration of reactor concepts to be proposed and funded by the private sector. The Secretary shall leverage the technical expertise of relevant Federal agencies and National Laboratories in order to minimize the time required

to enable construction and operation of privately funded experimental reactors at National Laboratories or other Department-owned sites while ensuring reasonable safety for persons working within these sites. Such reactors shall operate to meet the following objectives:

''(1) Enabling physical validation of novel reactor concepts.

''(2) Resolving technical uncertainty and increasing practical knowledge relevant to safety, resilience, security, and functionality of first-of-a-kind reactor concepts.

''(3) General research and development to improve nascent technologies.

''(b) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the National Laboratories, relevant Federal agencies, and other stakeholders, shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report assessing the Department's capabilities to authorize, host, and oversee privately funded fusion and advanced fission experimental reactors as described under subsection (a). The report shall address the following:

''(1) The Department's safety review and oversight capabilities, including options to leverage expertise from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and National Laboratories.

''(2) Potential sites capable of hosting activities described under subsection (a).

''(3) The efficacy of the Department's available contractual mechanisms to partner with the private sector and Federal agencies, including cooperative research and development agreements, strategic partnership projects, and agreements for commercializing technology.

''(4) Potential cost structures related to physical security, decommissioning, liability, and other long-term project costs.

''(5) Other challenges or considerations identified by the Secretary.''.

SEC. 10. BUDGET PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 959. BUDGET PLAN.

''Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, the Department shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate 2 alternative 10-year budget plans for civilian nuclear energy research and development by the Department. The first shall assume constant annual funding for 10 years at the appropriated level for the Department's civilian nuclear energy research and development for fiscal year 2016. The second shall be an unconstrained budget. The 2 plans shall include—

''(1) a prioritized list of the Department's programs, projects, and activities to best support the development of next generation nuclear energy technology;

''(2) realistic budget requirements for the Department to implement sections 955(c), 957, and 958 of this Act; and

''(3) the Department's justification for continuing or terminating existing civilian nuclear energy research and development programs.''.

(b) REPORT ON FUSION INNOVATION.—Not later than six months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Energy shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that will identify engineering designs for innovative fusion energy systems that have the potential to demonstrate net energy production not later than 15 years after the start of construction. In this report, the Secretary will identify budgetary requirements that would be necessary for the Department to carry out a fusion innovation initiative to accelerate research and development of these designs.

SEC. 11. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

The table of contents for the Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended by striking the item relating to section 957 and inserting the following:

''957. High-performance computation and supportive research.
''958. Enabling nuclear energy innovation.
''959. Budget plan.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.

I want to thank Ranking Member JOHNSON and Chairman SMITH for cosponsoring this important legislation and for their leadership in advocating for nuclear energy research and development.

I am grateful for the opportunity to work with my fellow Texans to guide research that will keep America safe, globally competitive, and support nuclear innovation. I also want to thank my colleagues on the Science Committee who cosponsored H.R. 4084.

Mr. Speaker, the Science Committee has spent over a year examining U.S. nuclear energy policy and preparation for this legislation. We have been holding hearings on supercomputing, advanced nuclear energy technology, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the DOE Energy Innovation Hubs.

Witnesses from the national labs, universities, and the private sector have all testified in support of the various reforms and policies outlined in this bill.

We took our time developing this legislation. By working together and listening to all the relevant stakeholders, we have developed broad bipartisan and bicameral support for this bill.

We have worked with our colleagues in the Senate to develop companion legislation as well. Last month an amendment with the text of this legislation passed, Mr. Speaker, with historic overwhelming support in the Senate.

For the first time in many years, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act will provide updated statutory direction to the Department of Energy's nuclear research activities to ensure that fundamental research is prioritized and precious resources are not wasted.

This bill requires DOE to leverage its supercomputing infrastructure and use modeling and simulation capabilities to develop advanced fission and fusion reactors.

The bill lays out a clear timeline and parameters for DOE to complete a research reactor. A research reactor is a crucial part of ensuring materials and nuclear fuels R&D can take place in the United States.

This type of research requires access to fast neutrons, which, unfortunately, are currently only available for civilian research in Russia, Mr. Speaker.

While modeling and simulation can accelerate R&D, nuclear energy must be validated through a physical source. The versatile neutron source under section 6 of H.R. 4084 will provide the United States with that vital capability.

□ 1745

This legislation also directs DOE to partner with the private sector to construct and operate reactor prototypes at DOE National Labs.

Nuclear reactors are expensive and highly regulated. Designing a first-of-a-kind reactor requires a blend of creative freedom for engineers to test new designs while ensuring safety throughout the entire process.

DOE sites, particularly the DOE National Labs, can provide a unique environment that safely allows for this kind of creative testing and development for advanced nuclear technology, without a burdensome regulatory process which slows progress to a crawl.

DOE has fundamental authority to enter into these innovative research partnerships, but won't have the confidence to act without direction from Congress, which is provided in this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

America must maintain our nuclear capabilities and continue to develop cutting-edge technology right here at home. Without the direction provided in this bill, we will continue to fall further and further behind, lose the ability to develop innovative nuclear technology, and be left importing reactor designs from overseas.

Today, we have the best nuclear engineers and manufacturing capacity in the world right here at home. We can't put that expertise at risk, Mr. Speaker.

Even more importantly, this bill will maintain America's capability to influence security and proliferation standards around the world, as more developing nations look to nuclear energy to grow their economies.

As a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I am constantly reminded of the need for American leadership in a dangerous world. H.R. 4084 reaffirms the United States' commitment to safely advancing nuclear technology.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.

Currently in the United States, nuclear power produces about 20 percent of our Nation's electrical supply, and that makes nuclear power the single largest carbon-free power source in the country.

However, our current nuclear fleet is growing older. Many of the plants across our country are many decades old and rely upon nuclear technology that is even older.

There have been substantial efforts in the past decade to move towards constructing new nuclear generating units with more modern designs. However, these efforts have had mixed results.

There have been construction difficulties, regulatory hurdles, and financing issues, all of which have conspired to delay the construction of new nuclear plants in America.

Some of these hurdles, though, are unlikely to go away with our current technologies. The Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima nuclear accidents have repeatedly highlighted the necessity of ensuring our nuclear fleet runs as safely as possible. This has led to much of the cost and difficulty of building the new plants.

I think the answer to these problems can be found in innovative new nuclear technologies. The Department of Energy and many different companies in the private sector are working on new forms of nuclear energy generation that hold the promise of much more effective and much safer nuclear generation stations.

Some of these technologies also address the extremely important issue of the radioactive waste streams that plague our current generation of nuclear plants.

H.R. 4084 takes several positive steps to help spur this innovation and deliver these very promising nuclear technologies to market.

I also want to highlight one additional reason to support H.R. 4084. As the world makes commitments to move toward a lower carbon future, as evidenced by the Paris climate agreement, it presents an opportunity to American Industry to supply low-carbon power platforms like nuclear power.

This bill will keep our country on the forefront of nuclear power technology, and it is my hope it will empower American Industry to be the suppliers of the next generation of nuclear plants throughout the entire world.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Congressman WEBER for sponsoring this legislation, and thank Science, Space, and Technology Committee Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON for bringing this bill to the floor in such a bipartisan manner.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I appreciate the gentleman's kind remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK).

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Texas, Mr. WEBER, for his leadership on this important issue and for allowing me a few moments to speak on it.

H.R. 4084 is a critical piece of legislation that will improve our Nation's nuclear energy research and foster the development of our next generation of nuclear reactors.

Throughout our history, the United States has led the world in developing new nuclear technologies, and this bill provides the tools to help us to continue this leadership into the future.

One of the many important provisions of this bill is that it directs the Department of Energy, through its National Laboratories, to develop new nuclear reactor concepts by partnering with the private sector.

With a national population of 320 million, and growing, we must be aggressive in our pursuit of new nuclear breakthroughs in order to power our Nation's future.

As a Member of Congress from Georgia, I understand the challenges of providing power to a rapidly growing population. Georgia's population is expected to increase by almost 2 million over the next 10 years, and without clean, affordable, reliable nuclear power, the task of bringing electricity to these new residents would be daunting.

The United States has not added any nuclear power generation for over 30 years. However, today, new power units are being built at Plant Vogtle in Georgia. These nuclear power generators will add the capacity to power 1 million homes and businesses once they are completed.

After visiting Plant Vogtle last year, I am confident that these new generators will reassure the country that nuclear power is safe, secure, and reliable, and will encourage the pursuit of future nuclear technology breakthroughs.

This bill is vital to the future of our Nation because it enables the private sector to utilize the research tools and resources at the DOE National Labs so scientists and engineers in the private sector can assist in the development of new nuclear technologies. Nuclear power generation that is clean, sustainable, and safe, is what will power America's homes and businesses for years to come.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. KNIGHT).

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. WEBER and Mr. BEYER for their congenial work on this issue.

I do rise today in support of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, as I am a cosponsor. Some of us believe a nuclear energy policy is important to the State of California, which is home to private companies and universities pursuing advanced nuclear technologies.

I am proud to support this legislation because it would provide capabilities for our technology innovators to develop new reactors that will yield amazing benefits to society through increased resistance to proliferation, minimizing waste, and perhaps even consuming existing waste stockpiles.

The possibilities are endless when we allow our engineers to creatively tackle the world's challenges, and this is no different for nuclear energy.

This is important because in my district we have recently seen the issues that can arise when an area is dependent on a single energy source.

California is home to many of the companies seeking to partner with the DOE and benefit from our Nation's unparalleled supercomputer capabilities. Leveraging the Department's assets will help our domestic industry capture a significant share of a growing, multibillion-dollar industry.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from Tri Alpha, a California-based fusion company, and UPower, a California-based advanced fission reactor company.

TRI ALPHA ENERGY,
February 24, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, House Science, Space & Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,
Ranking Member, House Science, Space & Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. RANDY WEBER,
Chairman, Energy Subcommittee, House Science, Space & Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH, RANKING MEMBER JOHNSON, and REPRESENTATIVE WEBER: Tri Alpha Energy is a fusion energy science research company headquartered in Foothill Ranch, California. Our purpose is to deliver world-changing clean fusion energy for economical, commercial power generation as fast as possible. Tri Alpha started as a research project at the University of California-Irvine in 1990. Today we have 150 employees, over 350 patents issued or pending, and are conducting experiments on a state of the art plasma generation device.

We are writing to express support for your bill H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act. Global market and environmental conditions demand that new sources of clean, baseload electricity be developed. New nuclear designs hold tremendous promise as a sustainable and cost-competitive power solution, but the United States government must provide a favorable policy environment for the necessary technology developments to take place.

H.R. 4084 would make several improvements at the Department of Energy to help move advanced nuclear technology concepts, including fusion, out of the laboratory and toward commercialization. The Nuclear Innovation Center, for example, would enable shorter development and permitting timelines by allowing private companies to work hand-in-hand with federal researchers and regulators on design validation.

We commend you and your staff for recognizing the enormous positive potential that advanced nuclear, including fusion, holds in

the United States and for offering thoughtful, bipartisan legislation to move the industry forward. We hope that H.R. 4084 will be offered for floor consideration soon and offer our support to help move the bill to final passage. We also look forward to working with your Committee on other fusion energy issues in the future. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

RICHARD C. BARTH, Ph.D.,
Senior Vice President, Government Relations, Tri Alpha Energy.

JANUARY 22, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH, *Chairman*,
Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, *Ranking Member*,
Hon. RANDY WEBER, *Chairman*,
Subcommittee on Energy and the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH, RANKING MEMBER JOHNSON, CHAIRMAN WEBER, and SENATOR WHITEHOUSE, SENATOR BOOKER, and SENATOR RISCH: On behalf of UPower Technologies, I am writing to commend your bipartisan leadership and foresight regarding the creation and passage of H.R. 4084 and the Senate companion which compose the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act (the Act).

UPower Technologies, Inc., soon to become Oklo, Inc., is a funded advanced reactor startup based in Silicon Valley. We believe that what is good for all advanced nuclear is what's best for the individual companies as well, and in turn what is best for the industry is best for the nation. Each entity in the advanced nuclear industry requires a high-functioning network of a diversity of companies, manufacturers, labs, suppliers, regulators, investors, and other expertise in order to thrive. And the United States will require this home-grown industry to be an international leader in clean energy, to provide high-paying, long-term jobs, and to provide clean power in a safe and reliable manner. Your commendable work on the Nuclear Innovation Capabilities Act will support these important U.S. goals.

The Act is a start to look critically at potential ways that the U.S. government can be more efficient both in utilizing its vast, existing investments in infrastructure and expertise, and in removing unreasonable blocks to American innovation.

The Act begins to lay out an important framework and focus for the Department of Energy (DOE) regarding advanced nuclear, especially regarding its relationship to industry. While the DOE has many resources in place, such as a wealth of valuable advanced codes and computational resources, a congressional mandate to focus on making these resources more accessible, cost effective, and utilized could make both the DOE complex and the advanced reactor industry more vibrant.

The Act also requires the DOE to consider locations for nuclear fueled advanced reactor testing. It will be critical as this process proceeds to ensure that locations for implementations are not limited among the various potential DOE sites and that fees and contracting are in line with reasonable costs and not compensating for irrelevant or excessive overhead.

The Act institutes a focus on having a fast reactor resource within the DOE complex. It will be a valuable asset to both the DOE and the industry.

The laudable goal of the Act is to streamline U.S. technology development to commercialization. As such, it will be critically important that the DOE work as seamlessly as possible with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) as far as providing data and allowing for the licensing activities required for commercialization, so that there need not be a duplication of nuclear-fueled implementations—possibly an exorbitant cost for any startup to survive.

The Act also asks the NRC for a report on timeline expectations for advanced reactor licensing. From the perspective of current or future advanced nuclear startup companies, an official report on timelines creates better certainty for private investment. This is potentially a very valuable provision to encourage private investment to further this relatively new U.S. industry. We also encourage continued dialog between the NRC, industry, and other stakeholders regarding how the regulatory process can benefit from significant advances in safety, further reducing uncertainty and accelerating deployment of safe, clean energy.

In summary, we support H.R. 4084 and the accompanying Senate bill. We appreciate the focus it brings to key areas to utilize U.S. investments and infrastructure to enhance U.S. innovation in clean energy. We also look forward to future legislation which may add appropriation and clarification of public-private contracting to further enable American innovation. UPower Technologies stands ready to support these important advances in U.S. energy leadership.

Sincerely,

JACOB DEWITTE,
CEO and founder, UPower Technologies, Inc. (changing to Oklo, Inc.), Sunnyvale, CA.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, having no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 12 minutes remaining.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 4084, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 4084 is vital to ensuring America's leadership in nuclear innovation. By harnessing the expertise of our Nation's National Labs, some of which we heard about today, its universities and entrepreneurs, the private sector can take the lead in developing groundbreaking advanced nuclear technology.

I especially want to thank my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee; of course, Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON; those who have also cosponsored the bill, including DAN LIPINSKI, BARRY LOUDERMILK, ED PERLMUTTER, BARBARA COMSTOCK, PAUL TONKO, JIM BRIDENSTINE, BRIAN BABIN, DANA ROHRABACHER, RANDY HULTGREN, BRUCE WESTERMAN, STEVE KNIGHT, BILL POSEY, FRANK LUCAS, RANDY NEUGEBAUER, and the gentleman from Virginia for his kind remarks. I also want to thank the dozens and dozens of researchers and stakeholders who came in and provided feedback as we developed this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter exchange between the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee on H.R. 4084.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: I write in regard to H.R. 4084, the ''Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.'' As you are aware, the bill was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, but the Committee on Energy and Commerce has a jurisdictional interest in the bill. I wanted to notify you that the Committee on Energy and Commerce will forgo action on H.R. 4084 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

This is done with the understanding that the Committee on Energy and Commerce's jurisdictional interests over this and similar legislation are in no way diminished or altered. In addition, the Committee reserves the right to seek conferees on H.R. 4084 and requests your support when such a request is made.

I would appreciate your response confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 4084 and ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 4084, the ''Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.'' Your support for this legislation and your assistance in ensuring its timely consideration are greatly appreciated.

I agree that a provision in the bill is within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I acknowledge that by waiving rights to further consideration of H.R. 4084, your Committee is not relinquishing its jurisdiction. A copy of our letters will be placed in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

I value your cooperation and look forward to working with you as we move ahead with this legislation.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this commonsense, bipartisan legislation. I appreciate my colleagues' help.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4084, the "Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act," directs civilian nuclear energy research and development to contribute to American nuclear power.

I thank the Energy Subcommittee Chairman, RANDY WEBER, and Science Committee Ranking Member, EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, for their leadership on this issue.

I also want to thank many bipartisan cosponsors of the bill, which include Science Committee Vice Chairman FRANK LUCAS, Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman BARBARA COMSTOCK and Subcommittee Ranking Member DAN LIPINSKI, Environment Subcommittee Chairman JIM BRIDENSTINE, Oversight Subcommittee Chairman BARRY LOUDERMILK, Space Subcommittee Chairman BRIAN BABIN, and full committee members DANA ROHRABACHER, ED PERLMUTTER, RANDY HULTGREN, PAUL TONKO, BRUCE WESTERMAN, STEVE KNIGHT, BILL POSEY, and RANDY NEUGEBAUER.

I am encouraged by the strong bipartisan support for the subsequently introduced Senate version of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which passed as an amendment to the Energy Policy Modernization Act by a vote of 87–4 on the Senate floor in January.

Advanced nuclear energy technology is the best opportunity to make reliable, emission-free electricity available throughout the modern and developing world.

America must maintain a strong nuclear technology sector in order to influence global nonproliferation standards. This will help us prevent civilian nuclear energy technology from being misused for weapons development overseas.

H.R. 4084 harnesses the strengths of the Department of Energy (DOE) National Labs, universities, and the private sector. It ensures that America's best and brightest minds advance this groundbreaking science and technology.

This legislation provides DOE with the direction and certainty it needs to develop plans for long term research and infrastructure development within the Office of Nuclear Energy.

H.R. 4084 authorizes DOE to take advantage of the National Labs' supercomputers in order to accelerate research for advanced fission and fusion experimental reactors. This program will leverage expertise from the private sector, universities, and National Labs.

The bill provides a clear timeline for DOE to complete a research reactor user facility within ten years. This research reactor will enable proprietary and academic research to develop supercomputing models and also design next generation nuclear energy technology.

Finally, H.R. 4084 creates a reliable mechanism for the private sector to partner with DOE labs to build fission and fusion prototype reactors at DOE sites.

Nuclear power has been a proven source of safe and emission-free electricity for over half a century. Now, America's strategic investments in advanced nuclear reactor technology can play a more meaningful role to reduce global emissions. Unfortunately, the ability to move innovative technology to the market has been stalled by government red tape.

By working around these bureaucratic barriers, H.R. 4084 will spur American competitiveness and keep us on the forefront of nuclear energy technology.

This legislation enables our talented engineers in the private sector, academia, and at the National Labs to develop the next generation of nuclear technology here in the United States.

Nuclear energy can be a clean, cheap answer to an energy independent, pro-growth, secure future.

I thank Chairman WEBER and Ranking Member JOHNSON of Texas for their work on this bill and encourage my colleagues to support it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which I am very pleased to co-sponsor.

Today, nuclear power plays a vital role in providing our country with clean, reliable energy. Nuclear power is currently the single largest carbon-free component of our electrical supply. One of my top priorities as a Member of Congress is preventing and mitigating the potentially devastating impacts of climate change. I believe that nuclear power can and should play a key role in our efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of our electricity sector.

But there currently are technical, economic, and policy challenges that prevent nuclear energy from playing a larger role in enabling our clean energy future. The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act takes several positive steps to address these challenges. Implementing the provisions in this bill will help accelerate the development of advanced nuclear energy technologies that are safer, less expensive, more efficient, and produce less waste than the current generation of nuclear reactors.

While the results of this research will clearly benefit the American consumers, it is my hope that it will also help spur American industry. As the world collectively moves towards greenhouse gas reductions, we need to make sure that American industry is ready to supply the technologies to fuel the world's low carbon future. This bill will help ensure that American industry will lead the world in supplying next generation nuclear power.

I would like to express my appreciation for the process we followed to put this bill together. Majority and Minority staff worked closely together, from engaging stakeholders through crafting and incorporating suggested changes to bill language. This is a great example of what we can achieve when we leave politics at the door and look for common ground to address the challenges facing our nation's research enterprise. Specifically, I'd like to thank my Texas colleague Mr. WEBER for sponsoring this legislation, and my other Texas colleague Chairman SMITH for working with the Minority to advance this bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4084, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EDWARD ''TED'' KAUFMAN AND MICHAEL LEAVITT PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1172) to improve the process of presidential transition, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1172

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Edward 'Ted' Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 4, 5, and 6 as sections 5, 6, and 7, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 3 the following:

''SEC. 4. TRANSITION SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES BEFORE ELECTION.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of General Services;

''(2) the term 'agency' means an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

''(3) the term 'eligible candidate' has the meaning given that term in section 3(h)(4); and

''(4) the term 'Presidential election' means a general election held to determine the electors of President and Vice President under section 1 or 2 of title 3, United States Code.

''(b) GENERAL DUTIES.—The President shall take such actions as the President determines necessary and appropriate to plan and coordinate activities by the Executive branch of the Federal Government to facilitate an efficient transfer of power to a successor President, including by—

''(1) establishing and operating a White House transition coordinating council in accordance with subsection (d); and

''(2) establishing and operating an agency transition directors council in accordance with subsection (e).

''(c) FEDERAL TRANSITION COORDINATOR.—The Administrator shall designate an employee of the General Services Administration who is a senior career appointee to—

''(1) carry out the duties and authorities of the General Services Administration relating to Presidential transitions under this Act or any other provision of law;

''(2) serve as the Federal Transition Coordinator with responsibility for coordinating transition planning across agencies, including through the agency transition directors council established under subsection (e);

''(3) ensure agencies comply with all statutory requirements relating to transition planning and reporting; and

''(4) act as a liaison to eligible candidates.

''(d) WHITE HOUSE TRANSITION COORDINATING COUNCIL.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 6 months before the date of a Presidential election, the President shall establish a White House transition coordinating council for purposes of facilitating the Presidential transition.

''(2) DUTIES.—The White House transition coordinating council shall—

''(A) provide guidance to agencies and the Federal Transition Coordinator regarding preparations for the Presidential transition, including succession planning and preparation of briefing materials;

''(B) facilitate communication and information sharing between the transition representatives of eligible candidates and senior employees in agencies and the Executive Office of the President; and

''(C) prepare and host interagency emergency preparedness and response exercises.

''(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the White House transition coordinating council shall include—