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NRC REACTION TO DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ANNOUNCEMENT
CONCERNING EXTERNAL OVERSIGHT OF DOE FACILITIES

Today's announcement that the Department of Energy (DOE) favors NRC oversight of certain DOE facilities is the result of more than two years of work by an internal DOE task force and, prior to that, by the Advisory Committee on External Regulation of DOE Nuclear Safety.

During this time, the NRC has provided considerable information to the participants in those efforts on how NRC might go about its prospective oversight role and what resources, planning, and legislation might be needed for NRC to undertake such a role. NRC already provides oversight of certain DOE activities, such as the West Valley high-level waste vitrification demonstration project and clean-up of high-level waste leaking from tanks stored at Hanford, Washington.

Keys to successful transition to further NRC oversight include obtaining legislative authority from Congress, along with resources to take on this major challenge, and allowance for a smooth transition to full compliance with the legislative mandate.

NRC stands ready to work with the Administration to address all the actions needed to implement this important announcement.

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