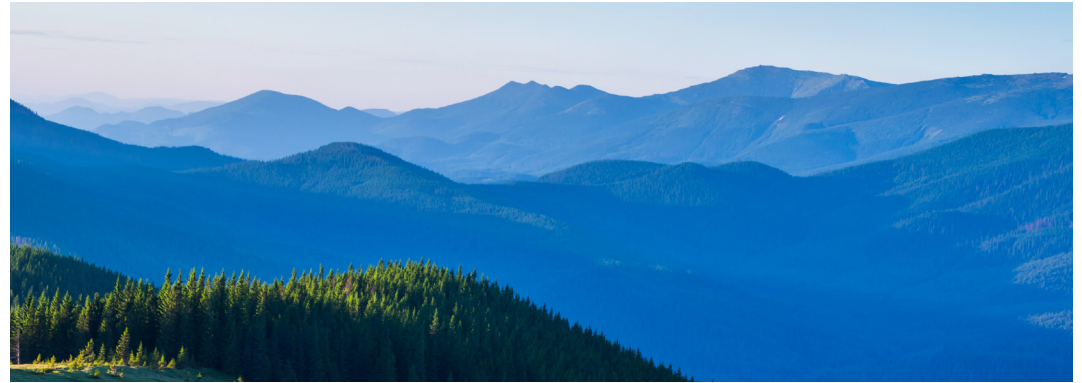


## DECARBONIZING OUR ECONOMY:

# Nuclear Energy Executive Action Priorities



As part of the plan to solve climate change and rebuild the economy, President Biden pledged to “leverage the carbon-pollution free energy provided by existing sources like nuclear” and make “far-reaching investments” in “critical clean energy technologies” including “advanced nuclear.” This focus on nuclear power makes sense. These plants are largest source of carbon-free electricity in the U.S. by far.

States and communities are also working to keep their nuclear power plants and exploring new construction, because they know the economic and environmental benefits of nuclear energy. The nuclear energy sector directly employs approximately 100,000 workers and is the highest-paying industry in the electric power generation sector. Yet economic pressures from historically low natural gas prices and incentives favoring other electricity technologies have contributed to the premature closure of 11 U.S. nuclear power plants.

Additionally, more American workers should be designing and building more nuclear power plants, both here and abroad. Nuclear energy is a strategic industry, forming 100-year relationships with our partner nations. Competing and winning in the global marketplace isn’t just a commercial victory—it is also a victory for U.S. standards for nuclear safety, nonproliferation and security.

The Biden-Harris administration can take a number of steps that will enable the U.S. to retain its high-paying nuclear power jobs and create new technologies that can allow U.S. firms to win new business and create new American jobs without relying on Congress.

## 1. Ensure Continued Operation of Existing Reactors

Without urgent action, additional nuclear plants will be unnecessarily shuttered in the near-term, the jobs needed to run them will be lost and their carbon-free generation will be permanently lost. The most cost-effective step that can be taken in achieving carbon goals is to preserve these carbon-free energy workhorses.

- **National Priority**

The Biden-Harris administration should issue a Statement of Administration Position or otherwise communicate the importance of retaining nuclear power plants in conjunction with its announcement of the U.S.'s updated nationally determined contribution.

- **Electric Market Reform**

FERC should ensure that states maintain autonomy to create clean energy incentive programs. The President should nominate FERC Commissioners committed to respecting state decisions on electricity supply and integrating state and regional carbon pricing proposals into organized market rules.

## 2. Accelerate Demonstration and Commercialization of New Technologies

New nuclear generation will be needed to achieve meaningful carbon reductions in the electric, transportation and industrial energy sectors.

- **Federal Energy Procurements**

As set forth in the Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, the Biden-Harris administration should use tools such as federal power purchase agreements to support the continued operation of existing nuclear power plants and the construction of next-generation reactors.

- **Modernizing Regulation**

The Biden-Harris administration should also ensure that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) continues its effort—started under the Obama administration—to transform its regulatory approaches to keep pace with new technologies and operating practices. Efficiency of regulations, including streamlining environmental reviews and recognizing nuclear's environmental benefits, is important to ensure this carbon-free technology is viable.

## 3. Promote Increased Nuclear Exports

Building nuclear plants overseas provides tremendous benefits to U.S. job creation and balance of trade; a recent report from UxC estimates U.S. exports of civil nuclear technology could total \$1.3 to \$1.9 trillion through 2050. Government must work alongside industry to help U.S. firms compete against their state-owned rivals.

- **Ensure Federal Coordination**

Nuclear cooperation and subsequent commercial projects are often the product of government-to-government engagement at the highest levels. Restoration of a nuclear energy policy director position within the Executive Office of the President is an important step to ensuring this coordination and an appropriate focus on nuclear energy.

- **Embrace Nuclear Energy as Clean Energy**

As the world pursues clean and sustainable energy, it is critical that nuclear energy have access to the same resources as other clean energy technologies. To that end, it is vital that the Biden-Harris administration works to ensure that nuclear energy is included in the development of international and multi-national standards for clean energy development. Specific examples include the EU's Taxonomy and Clean Energy Finance initiatives under the U.N.

## 4. Bold Action to Fulfill the Government's Responsibility on Nuclear Waste

The long-standing impasse over the long-term management of nuclear waste must be resolved if nuclear energy is to achieve its full potential as part of an increasingly clean U.S. energy system. The U.S. nuclear industry stands ready to work with Congress and the Biden-Harris administration to get the nuclear waste program back on track.

- **Administration Action**

While Congress considers the future of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, the Biden-Harris administration should take steps to stand up an organization to resume management of the nuclear waste program.