



Advancing Nuclear Reactor Technologies for National Security

Administration Policy:

President Trump issued an executive order (EO) titled [Advancing Nuclear Reactor Technologies for National Security](#) which aims to remove government barriers to private sector investment in advanced nuclear technologies and accelerate deployment of these technologies at Federal sites. Specifically, the EO would make it U.S. policy to rapidly deploy advanced nuclear reactors to power national security infrastructure, support private-sector innovation, and align federal resources—such as excess uranium—with mission needs.

Section 3 of the EO directs the Secretary of Defense, through the Secretary of the Army, to establish a nuclear energy program of record, and requires a domestic military base to have a U.S. Army-regulated nuclear reactor operational by September 30, 2028. Within 240 days, DOD is required to propose legislative and regulatory changes to enable military reactor deployment and spent fuel management.

Section 4 directs the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Energy (DOE) to rapidly deploy advanced nuclear reactors for national security infrastructure, including AI data centers and military installations, while dramatically expanding U.S. nuclear export capabilities, streamlining reactor siting and fuel supply chains, and coordinating interagency support to reduce reliance on foreign energy sources.

Section 5 requires DOE to identify all usable uranium and plutonium within DOE's inventories that may be recycled or processed into reactor fuel and release at least 20 metric tons of high assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU) into a fuel bank for private projects on DOE sites. DOE must retain fuel for national security missions and develop a domestic enrichment plan. DOE and DoD may authorize privately funded fuel recycling and fabrication on their lands.

Section 6 authorizes DOE and DOD to use existing contracting and cooperation authorities to support nuclear projects, including design, operation, and novel defense applications. Agencies are encouraged to partner on technical collaboration and resource sharing. The EO instructs DoD and DOE to seek NEPA categorical exclusions and emergency procedures to accelerate reactor siting and construction for defense-critical purposes, in consultation with the Council on Environmental Quality.

Section 8 of this EO directs the Department of State to expand peaceful nuclear cooperation agreements under the [Atomic Energy Act](#). Agencies should develop a strategy to expand U.S. civil nuclear exports through financing tools, regulatory alignment, and high-level advocacy. DOE must expedite nuclear export licenses within 30 days of a complete application.

Background:

- Congress passed the [National Environmental Policy Act](#) in 1979 which mandates that federal agencies consider the environmental impacts of their actions and decisions. It requires agencies to prepare detailed statements on potential environmental impacts, adverse effects, alternatives, and irreversible commitments of resources.
- According to the [Atlantic Council](#), “there are currently no domestic commercial fuel recycling facilities in the United States, and the partnership outlined in this order between the Department of Energy and industry will likely be a boon to US reactor companies looking to use recycled fuel, especially as competitor countries stand up their own recycling capabilities.”
- A fact sheet from the White House can be found [here](#).