



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL
WORKERS**

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LONNIE R. STEPHENSON
International President

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December 1, 2020

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public
Works
United States Senate
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senate
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo
United States Senate
239 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cory Booker
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso, Senator Whitehouse, Senator Crapo and Senator Booker:

On behalf of the over 775,000 active and retired members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), I am writing in support of the American Nuclear Infrastructure Act of 2020 (S. 4897). This bipartisan legislation would reestablish U.S. nuclear energy leadership by preserving the existing fleet, revitalizing the domestic nuclear energy supply chain infrastructure, and supporting the deployment of advanced U.S. nuclear technologies.

Nuclear power produces nearly 20 percent of our nation's electricity and most of our carbon-free electricity. In 2019 alone, U.S. reactors produced more than 800 billion kilowatt hours of electricity and prevented the emission of 505.8 million metric tons of carbon. Without nuclear power plants operating in 28 states, carbon emissions from the U.S. electric sector would be 30 percent higher.

Given today's energy mix and clean energy goals, the U.S. and the world alike will need nuclear energy alongside other clean energy sources. Nuclear energy facilities demonstrate unmatched reliability by operating with an average capacity factor of more than 90 percent. Firm, carbon-free nuclear power will complement other carbon-free technologies and be essential in meeting carbon reduction goals.

Fourteen thousand members of the IBEW are employed full-time in the nuclear industry at over 55 facilities across the United States. Thousands more IBEW members rotate through nuclear plants with the contractor workforce as needed for maintenance and refueling.

Most nuclear plants are the economic core of rural communities. Each plant employs between 400 and 700 Americans with high quality, long term, steady work at wages that are an average of 36 percent higher than the prevailing local





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salary rate. On average, each plant contributes \$40 million in annual payroll and \$470 million in revenue from buying local good and services. They also provide much-needed funding for local community services like schools, roads, and law enforcement.

It is increasingly clear that the transition to a low carbon economy will be more affordable, sustainable and uphold the promise of family-sustaining jobs if existing nuclear plants are preserved and the development of advanced nuclear energy systems is accelerated. Nuclear energy continues to be the only source of zero carbon generation that can reliably produce mass amounts of clean energy 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. However, if nuclear power's carbon-free, baseload generation attributes are not appropriately valued, plants will continue to retire prematurely, making it more difficult and more expensive to meet clean energy goals. More than 8,000 megawatts of nuclear capacity has retired in recent years and additional nuclear facilities, which generate another 8,000 megawatts, have announced plans to shut down prematurely in the near future. These closures have meant the loss of thousands of jobs for IBEW members. Additional premature closures will make job losses even more severe.

The American Nuclear Infrastructure Act would help address the current market failure to value carbon-free generation by establishing a credit program for reactors at risk of closing prematurely. This program would help to bridge the gap until clean generation is appropriately valued and is vitally important to making the transition to a low carbon electricity more affordable and sustainable. This legislation further supports the development of advanced nuclear technologies and seeks to ensure a robust domestic nuclear supply chain infrastructure that hold the promise of creating good jobs while reasserting American leadership in the nuclear sector.

On behalf of the IBEW and its members, I wish to thank you for introducing this legislation. Passage of the American Nuclear Infrastructure Act will provide environmental and economic benefits by retaining our nation's largest source of carbon-free electricity and supporting the development and deployment of advanced nuclear reactor technologies.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lonnie R. Stephenson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Lonnie R. Stephenson
International President

LRS:nl

