Resolution 24-05

Sponsors: Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems; Nebraska Public Power District; MEAG Power

In Support of Nuclear Power and an Efficient and Effective Nuclear Regulatory Commission

The American Public Power Association (APPA) believes that nuclear power has a fundamental role to play in the United States' electricity generating mix. For decades, public power utilities have owned and safely operated nuclear power plants around the country, providing safe, reliable, and emissions-free electricity to their customers.

As public power utilities further reduce greenhouse gas emissions, both in their generation portfolios and through their electrification of appliances, home heating, and transportation, emissions-free, dispatchable nuclear power will be needed not only to meet existing demand, but also to accommodate load growth. Many public power utilities are actively pursuing or considering nuclear power as a part of their future resource mix, including small modular reactors and other advanced nuclear technologies.

For this reason, the safety and reliability of U.S. nuclear power plants is vitally important. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or Commission) was created by Congress in 1974 to "ensure the safe use of radioactive materials for beneficial civilian purposes while protecting people and the environment." The NRC is widely considered to be the international gold standard for nuclear regulatory agencies and APPA strongly supports the Commission's commitment to nuclear safety.

To maintain the current fleet and to bring new nuclear power plants online, the NRC must have regulatory processes in place that are efficient, effective, and appropriate for all types of nuclear technologies. A reasonable and streamlined regulatory process, that doesn't compromise safety, will ensure nuclear projects are licensed in an efficient manner, reducing the time, and cost, necessary to bring critical new resources online or to relicense existing plants already safely providing power to customers.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the American Public Power Association (APPA) supports the continued use of nuclear power, a key source of emissions-free, baseload power; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That APPA strongly supports an effective U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) with a clear and focused commitment to nuclear safety; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That APPA supports efforts to provide the NRC with all the regulatory and statutory tools necessary to streamline the licensing of advanced nuclear generating facilities to shorten the time necessary to win final approval of an application for the operation of a new nuclear unit; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That APPA urges the NRC to finalize a regulatory framework for the licensing of new nuclear plants that takes into account the "standard design" components of applicants to shorten the lengthy review process for the granting of final operating licenses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That APPA believes NRC fees must be reasonable, transparent, and tied to specific regulatory services provided; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That APPA supports federal efforts to ensure a secure fuel supply chain, both for existing nuclear reactors and advanced nuclear technologies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That APPA supports federal efforts to further the development of small modular reactors (SMRs), including the licensing and commercialization of SMR technologies for the use of electric utilities in the U.S.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That APPA supports legislation, programs, incentives, and initiatives that help facilitate accelerated SMR development and commercialization and to maximize the safety, reliability, and efficiency of new and existing nuclear power plants.

Adopted at the Legislative & Resolutions Committee Meeting
February 27, 2024
Sunsets in March 2032