

**Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman  
October 11, 2001**

Today the Committee will consider H.R. 2983, the "Price-Anderson Reauthorization Act of 2001."

Prior to September 11<sup>th</sup>, I had concerns about reauthorizing Price-Anderson without significant reforms. These concerns have been compounded by the terrorist attacks.

This bill is basically a subsidy to the nuclear power industry. But I am not convinced that this industry needs another subsidy from this Congress.

The House has already worked overtime to deliver new subsidies to the nuclear industry. H.R. 4, which passed the House on August 2, gives tax breaks for nuclear power worth \$1.9 billion over the next ten years. It also provides numerous subsidies for nuclear energy, totaling over \$633 million over the next three years, and over \$100 million more in later years. In total, H.R. 4 provides almost \$1 billion for nuclear power in the next three years alone, and \$2.7 billion over the next ten years.

Reauthorization of the Price-Anderson Act would amount to yet another subsidy to the nuclear industry. The Energy and Air Quality Subcommittee received testimony on June 27 that the value of the Price-Anderson Act to the owners of nuclear powerplants amounts to a subsidy of \$366 million to \$3.5 billion each year. Reauthorizing the Price-Anderson Act to apply to new reactors would increase this subsidy even more.

Since September 11, it has become even more clear that we need to take a fundamental look at Price Anderson and the construction of new nuclear reactors in the United States.

Before we pave the way for the construction of many new nuclear reactors, we ought to carefully examine these facilities in light of the recent terrorist attacks. Congress should be sure that we are not unthinkingly inviting targets into our communities.

Mr. Chairman, there are numerous amendments that need to be made to this bill before it is acceptable. Some of them will be offered by Mr. Markey. I will offer two amendments to this legislation.

The first amendment will coordinate the licensing of new nuclear reactors with the new Office of Homeland Security. The Director of Homeland Security will be in the best position to understand the risk of terrorism. Therefore, the Director should be involved prior to the licensing of any new commercial nuclear reactor.

The second amendment seeks to provide critical information which will fill a gap in our knowledge. Recent press articles indicate that the nation's nuclear powerplants may be vulnerable to terrorist attack. Last week, the Committee adopted an important amendment offered by Mr. Markey that will update the assumptions used in preparing for a terrorist attack. But we also

need a better understanding of what risks are at issue.

A significant hazard we face is from an accident or attack that breaches the containment at a reactor and results in an unshielded meltdown. Unfortunately, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission states that it has no idea what the consequences would be of an unshielded meltdown. My second amendment will address this problem by commissioning a report by the National Academy of Sciences.

The public demands that Congress set aside the desires of the special interests and take steps to address the needs of the nation during this time of trial. I hope all Members can support my amendments. They may not completely address the threat of nuclear terrorism, but they are an important step in the right direction.