



N A R U C  
National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

For Immediate Release

Contact: Regina L. Davis, 202-898-9382, [rdavis@naruc.org](mailto:rdavis@naruc.org)

## **Maryland's Commissioner O'Donnell to Testify on Draft Bill for Nuclear Waste Disposal**

### *Inaction on Nuclear Waste Costs Millions of Dollars Daily*

WASHINGTON (April 30, 2019) — Commissioner Anthony J. O'Donnell, of the Maryland Public Service Commission, will testify on behalf of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners at the May 1 hearing on nuclear waste disposal. O'Donnell is scheduled to appear before the United States Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works at the 10:00 a.m. hearing, "*Legislative Hearing on a Discussion Draft Bill, S. \_\_\_, Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2019.*"

The discussion draft provides practical reforms to the nation's nuclear waste management policy to ensure the federal government's legal obligations to dispose of spent nuclear fuel and high-level waste are fulfilled.

NARUC has been engaged in this issue for decades and maintains its position that ratepayers and the public interest have not been served by the years of inaction on the matter of nuclear waste disposal. O'Donnell, who chairs NARUC's Subcommittee on Nuclear Issues-Waste Disposal, has noted in filed testimony that ratepayers have invested more than \$40 billion into the U.S. Nuclear Waste Fund—a nuclear waste program that has not advanced in 30 years. Moreover, American taxpayers are subsidizing between \$500 and \$800 million annually in legal judgment payments—about \$2 million every day. "It is imperative that this program move toward a solution for the benefit of utility ratepayers who have already made substantial contributions to the fund," said O'Donnell.

The discussion draft is a positive move toward resolving and correcting the serious structure flaws in a program that has languished for decades. The fiscally responsible mechanisms, along with a pathway toward an interim storage solution tied to cost-benefit analysis are key aspects of the draft supported by NARUC resolutions.

"This is a positive step toward finally serving the public interest and being accountable to America's utility customers, who have paid billions of dollars into this program," said NARUC President Nick Wagner. "NARUC members were at the table at the inception of the nuclear waste program and we are committed to working with the federal government to ensure that solutions are found for the treatment of spent nuclear fuel."

The draft legislation is available at <http://bit.ly/2VBl8Sa>. To learn more, visit the hearing page at <http://bit.ly/2WerJ1l>.

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***NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of State public utility commissions before the three branches of the Federal government.***