



AMERICAN ENRICHMENT DEPLOYMENT LICENSING MODERNIZATION (S. 5249 | H.R. 9612)

DATE INTRODUCED:

S. 5249 - 08/05/2026

H.R. 9612 - 07/09/2026

WHAT:

Uranium enrichment is one of several essential steps in the nuclear fuel cycle. However, unlike other fuel cycle facilities, enrichment is required by law to receive its NRC license prior to starting construction. This special treatment is not necessary to ensure safety. Regardless of when the facility is constructed, the NRC must still certify the safety of that facility before it can receive nuclear material and start operating. Today, because enrichment facilities cannot begin construction until licensing is complete, developers spend years waiting before breaking ground, increasing project timelines and financing costs.

The Modernizing Outdated Regulations to Expand American Fuel (MORE American Fuel) Act of 2026 in the Senate and the American Enrichment Deployment Act in the House of Representatives allow uranium enrichment facilities to start construction before receiving an NRC license, which is the same approach as other fuel cycle facilities. Allowing construction and licensing to proceed in parallel means enrichment facilities could reach operation over 12 months faster without changing the NRC's licensing standards or safety review process.

WHY IT MATTERS:

The nuclear fuel supply chain is a critical national security priority. Russia controls [over 40%](#) of global enrichment capacity, and China is rapidly expanding its capabilities. Additionally, Russia and China are currently the only countries that enrich high-assay, low-enriched uranium (HALEU), a critical type of fuel for advanced reactors, at a commercial scale. With the U.S. ban on imported Russian uranium taking full effect in 2028, expanding domestic enrichment capacity has become an urgent national priority.

Congress has already taken significant steps to rebuild the domestic fuel supply chain, including establishing the Advanced Nuclear Fuel Availability Program, enacting the Nuclear Fuel Security Act and investing billions of dollars in new domestic enrichment facilities. This legislation builds on those efforts by removing an unnecessary regulatory bottleneck that delays construction while maintaining the NRC's full authority over licensing and safety.

WHAT'S NEXT:

This bill would accelerate the deployment of new domestic uranium enrichment facilities. Expanding U.S. enrichment capacity strengthens energy and national security, reduces reliance on geopolitical adversaries and secures a reliable fuel supply for critical American nuclear infrastructure.

ORIGINAL SPONSORS:

S. 5249

Senators Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) and Mark Kelly (D-AZ)

H.R. 9612

Reps. Russell Fry (R-SC), Erin Houchin (R-IN) and Kim Schrier (D-WA)

SUPPORT:

ClearPath Action, Clean Air Task Force, Third Way, The Breakthrough Institute, Nuclear Innovation Alliance, Nuclear Energy Institute, General Matter, Orano USA

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