



[Home](#)
[Services](#)
[Issues](#)
[News](#)
[7th District](#)
[About Ed](#)
[Contact](#)

Search the site

[Home](#) » [Issues](#) » [Energy and Environment](#) » [Press Releases](#)

MARCH 8, 2010: MARKEY REQUESTS GAO INVESTIGATION INTO NUCLEAR PLANT SAFETY, LICENSING PROCESS

Lawmaker: "Nuclear Renaissance Requires Public Confidence"

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Representative Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), chairman of the Energy and Environment Subcommittee, today announced his request that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) commence a thorough review of the adequacy of nuclear reactor safety regulations and oversight, as well as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) process of granting licenses for both new and existing nuclear power plants.

"For nuclear power to play a major role in our nation's clean energy future, the public must have confidence that new reactors can be built safely and that existing reactors can continue to operate reliably," said Markey. **"We need to make sure that nuclear plants are adequately protected from both safety and fiscal problems that could place the public at risk."**

Chairman Markey, whose Energy and Environment Subcommittee has jurisdiction over the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the nuclear power industry, requested the GAO report in order to find out:

-Whether the NRC processes for licensing new reactors and extending the licenses of existing reactors is sufficiently rigorous with respect to safety, and sufficiently transparent with respect to public access to the decision-making process.

-Whether actions by the NRC to evaluate and improve the resilience of nuclear power plants to climate change and natural disasters, such as earthquakes, severe storms and drought, are sufficient to ensure public safety.

Whether the NRC's response to ongoing fire safety issues has resulted in an improvement in the ability of nuclear reactors to withstand fires.

-Whether funds collected by nuclear reactor licensees for the purposes of decommissioning reactors are sufficient, particularly given the economic downturn and potential additional cleanup costs due to soil and water contamination by leaking buried pipes.

In January, Chairman Markey joined Reps. Hall (D-NY), Adler (D-NJ) and Welch (D-VT) in requesting a GAO investigation into the integrity, safety, inspection, maintenance, regulations and enforcement issues surrounding buried piping at our nation's nuclear power plants. That request coincided with the recent contamination identified at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant, likely due to leaks from buried piping. As a result of the leaks, and the earlier false claims by licensee employees that no buried pipes exist, the Vermont Senate has voted to prevent the relicensing of the plant for another 20 years.

A full copy of the Markey request to the GAO can be found [HERE](http://markey.house.gov/docs/gaoinspection.pdf)
<http://markey.house.gov/docs/gaoinspection.pdf>

COMMITTEE ON
Natural Resources

COMMITTEE ON
Energy & Commerce

WAXMAN-MARKEY
Clean Energy Jobs



###

[Home](#)
[Services](#)
[Issues](#)
[News](#)
[7th District](#)
[About Ed](#)
[Contact](#)

[Facebook](#)
[Twitter](#)
[YouTube](#)
[Flickr](#)
[RSS](#)

Medford
5 High Street
Suite 101
Medford, MA 02155
p: (781) 396-2900

Framingham
188 Concord Street
Suite 102
Framingham, MA 01702
p: (508) 875-2900

Washington, D.C.
2108 Rayburn House
Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
p: (202) 225-2836



[House Democratic Leader Pelosi](#) [House Democratic Whip Hoyer](#) [House Assistant Leader Clyburn](#) [House Democrats](#)

This is an official Web site of the United States House of Representatives

[Privacy & Security Policy](#)