

Pearce Legislation to Increase Nuclear Power

September 15, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: BRIAN PHILLIPS

202.225.4759, brian.phillips@mail.house.gov

Washington DC - Today, Congressman Steve Pearce submitted legislation that would seriously address America's critical need for energy by expediting the application process for building safe and efficient nuclear power plants. The "Fast Track Nuclear Act of 2008" creates a three pronged test that would mandate the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to approve or deny qualifying applications within one calendar year.

"Nuclear power offers tremendous opportunities to address our nation's energy crisis," said Pearce. "Our energy needs are only going to expand in the next decade. We must have solutions today that will meet those needs, but do so in an economically and environmentally sensitive way. Nuclear power is the only alternative that is cheap, clean and ready."

The bill directs the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to fast-track any application for a license to construct a nuclear power plant that meets a strict three-pronged test: the application incorporates a facility design that is already approved by the Commission; the facility will be built by a company with a proven history of building safe and efficient power plant facilities; and an appropriate authority within the community has signaled their support for the plant.

"In short, you need a proven design, a proven builder and show broad community support. With those components, there is no reason an application should take the current four years to approve," Pearce added.

"Further, this bill takes serious steps forward to increase our use of clean energy technology that is inexpensive to produce and readily available to us today. Other sources, such as wind and solar, are decades away from becoming significant sources of power that can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels for electricity."

Pearce's bill also authorizes the Secretary of Energy to fund research at Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories for innovative nuclear designs that produce more energy, reduce nuclear waste and increase safety features of the plants.