

R023- 0910

10 **A resolution concerning**
20 **THE REFORM OF NUCLEAR ENERGY REGULATORY AGENCIES**

30 **WHEREAS:** Nuclear power currently possesses the lowest base load electricity costs of any other
40 electricity source; and,

50 **WHEREAS:** Although nuclear reactors presently run on uranium, nuclear reactors can also employ
60 thorium as fuel – which is so abundant that nuclear reactors will never face a fuel shortage; and,

70 **WHEREAS:** Republican Charlie Crist of Florida and Democrats Ed Rendell of Pennsylvania and Martin
80 O'Malley of Maryland, governors who get high marks from environmental groups, all support proposals for
90 new reactors in their states; and,

100 **WHEREAS:** Compared to other alternatives, nuclear energy poses very little environmental detriment;
110 and,

120 **WHEREAS:** Nuclear energy produces less carbon in grams per kWh than wind, hydro, geothermal, gas,
130 oil, and coal sources; and,

140 **WHEREAS:** In addition, nuclear power plants take up less land than all other types of power stations
150 needing only 630 square meters per megawatt produced; and,

160 **WHEREAS:** Nuclear power plants also emit fairly little radioactivity, with coal *ahead* and geothermal and
170 oil *just behind* nuclear in the amount of radioactive emissions the fuel sources produce; and,

180 **WHEREAS:** The toxicity of nuclear waste is many times exaggerated, as few feet of soil, water or
190 concrete can serve as effective storage for nuclear waste; and,

200 **WHEREAS:** The public's perceptions of nuclear power have been shaped by the Chernobyl exception
210 rather than the rule -- that nuclear power in general is safe; and,

220 **WHEREAS:** According to *Contemporary Physics*, the risk posed by living near a nuclear plant is
230 equivalent to that of driving a car 60 meters daily, and the total reduction in life expectancy would be
240 equivalent to smoking five cigarettes throughout one's lifetime; and,

250 **WHEREAS:** Nevertheless, due to decades of public fear and misconceptions, the US nuclear industry has
260 fallen behind that of other nations; and,

270 **WHEREAS:** During America's disillusionment with nuclear power, technology advances have led to the
280 creation of the safest reactors in history; and,

290 **WHEREAS:** There are currently 440 nuclear reactors worldwide that generate one fifth of the world's
300 energy; and,

310 **WHEREAS:** Out of the world's countries, France employs the most nuclear energy, with 80% of its
320 electricity generated by nuclear reactors; and,

330 **WHEREAS:** In Western Europe, nuclear power has become more popular than coal; and,

340 **WHEREAS:** Countries with fewer natural fuel resources such as coal and gas generally make the largest
350 investments in nuclear power; and,

360 **WHEREAS:** Nonetheless, as worldwide demand for fuels increase as supplies decrease, more countries
370 are looking to nuclear energy as a viable alternative; and,

380 **WHEREAS:** IF the U.S. seeks to rebuild its nuclear power industry, it must restructure itself regardless of
390 how much money it receives from the government in order to function most efficiently and effectively; and,

400 **WHEREAS:** Regulation of the nuclear energy industry is disjointed, complex, and unnecessarily prevents
410 industry growth; and,

420 **WHEREAS:** Additionally, the “old nuclear” industry and the “new industry” renewable energy proponents
430 hope to build today, possess several distinguishing points that the one size fits all policy in place today
440 cannot effectively deal with; and,

450 **WHEREAS:** Communication failures and clashes frequently arise between the several disparate groups
460 regulating the industry; and,

470 **WHEREAS:** Currently, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency, and
480 the Department of Energy work together to regulate the nuclear industry, thus creating a “bureaucratic
490 quagmire.”

500 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** To fix this problem the U.S. must develop new policies regarding
510 nuclear regulation which focus upon creating two branches of regulation – one which would oversee the
520 revitalization of a new nuclear industry and one which would oversee complications in the old industry.

530 **MANDATES:**

540 Governor Martin O’ Malley

550 Lt. Governor Anthony Brown

560 Senator Ben Cardin

570 Senator Barbara Mikulski

580 The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Delegate

Sponsor:

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