Finally, any changes to either the real or perceived independence of the NRC would undermine the credibility of the regulatory process and the industry, both domestically and internationally. This would include a lack of transparency on rulemakings, Commission votes, or safety findings.

Decades of cumulative operational experience demonstrate that nuclear power is a safe and dependable energy source. NRC decisions concerning the use of nuclear energy should appropriately balance risks and benefits. The NRC should adopt a holistic approach to regulation that aligns with how we treat risk across various hazards. Unfortunately, this EO could undermine the confidence and ongoing improvements to the NRC's regulatory framework. The implementation must be thoughtful; otherwise, it may severely impact the stated goals of the Trump administration and industry to deploy new nuclear power.

Conclusion

Overall, the ANS Expert Advisory Group found the EOs to be a significant step forward toward the deployment of advanced reactors and recognized the extraordinary policy commitment by the Trump administration to advancing U.S. nuclear technology. The group also acknowledged that implementing the EOs will present a challenge via a constrained budget and may in some cases require legislative changes to the Atomic Energy Act and Energy Reorganization Act. In the worst case, some aspects of the EOs would have a counterproductive effect.

The Expert Advisory Group agreed that successful implementation will require deliberate policy supported by the federal budget, strong interagency coordination, sustained investment in people and infrastructure, and regulatory modernization grounded in scientific research.