**Northwest Public Power Association**

**Resolution 2023-10**

**In Support of Advanced and Small Modular Reactors**

**Background**

Small modular reactors (SMRs) – nuclear generators under 300 MW that can be scaled to meet local needs – and advanced reactors are an important addition to the nation’s energy mix. These advanced technologies can provide emissions-free baseload power and numerous other benefits and applications.

The U.S. Department of Energy has provided funding for the accelerated development and

commercialization of SMRs. An SMR project is moving through the licensing process at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, for a reactor to be located at the Idaho National Laboratory site near Idaho Falls. The project is scheduled to connect to the grid in 2029. DOE’s Advanced Reactor Demonstration Program (ARDP) funds two demonstration projects expected to be sited in the Pacific Northwest and be in operation by the end of this decade.

SMRs and advanced reactors can provide highly resilient power to national security and mission critical activities. Existing authorities for federal power purchase agreements (PPAs) and government policies for energy procurement could be enhanced to support a fair and level playing field for SMRs and advanced reactors. The duration of PPAs are typically limited to 10 years or less, far too short to justify the investment in a generation asset that will be commissioned to operate for 40 years or more. Complex federal budgeting rules often require federal agencies to fund the entire PPA in the first year, significantly constraining investment in power purchase contracts that would extend beyond 10 years. Robust and consistent federal support for these first-of-a-kind and demonstration reactors is crucial to establish and commercialize this technology and to maintain our dominance in the global market for nuclear power. In addition, many advanced designs require high-assay, low-enriched uranium (HALEU) as fuel, which is not produced domestically in quantities to support current projects, let alone the expected market.

**NWPPA’s Position**

* NWPPA supports legislation, programs, incentives, and initiatives that help facilitate accelerated SMR and advanced reactor development and commercialization. NWPPA encourages continued and increasing appropriations to fund DOE programs for new reactor projects.
* NWPPA supports legislation that will modify federal power purchase parameters in support of long-term contracts beyond 10 years.
* NWPPA supports legislation to promote a secure, domestic supply of HALEU.

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