

Good morning, Chairman Weber, Ranking Member Ross, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. My name is Isaiah Taylor and I am the CEO and founder of Valar Atomic. Thank you for holding this hearing to examine the state of advanced nuclear reactor research in the United States.

The United States has been a leader in nuclear energy since its genesis. Nuclear was started and developed here – but then we stopped. Now we are making up for lost time. Nuclear is a part of our past and it is integral to our future. It is the energy technology that will power AI, take us to other planets, revolutionize manufacturing, and drastically reduce the cost of a fundamental civilizational input.

Valar Atomic will meet the demands of this moment. Since its inception, Valar has dispensed with the notion nuclear needs to move slowly. Last November, Valar Atomic became the first startup in history to achieve nuclear criticality. In February, Valar flew our nuclear reactor in three C-17 aircrafts from March Air Reserve Base in California to Hill Air Force Base in Utah. Secretary of Energy Chris Wright and Undersecretary of War Michael Duffey accompanied the reactor on its historic flight.

On June 18, Valar Atomic reached criticality again in our Ward250 reactor. In doing so, we fulfilled executive order 14301 and became the first start-up to achieve criticality outside of the national lab system. On July 1, Valar powered an Nvidia Blackwell chip with Ward250 and became the first startup to generate nuclear electricity. This list of accomplishments in the last year is just beginning.

But despite this amazing start, our rivals are still ahead of the United States in the rate of new nuclear deployment. Since 2016, China has built 27 gigawatt-class reactors vs. 2 in the United States. Energy has always been a key input to civilization and industrial power. But in the next 50 years, energy will be far more important than it ever was before to the stature of a civilization. As AI and robotics continue to improve, most problems of physical production will become problems of energy access and cost. In the time frame of decades, the civilization with the greatest amount of energy will be the one that has the ability to either uphold freedom or impose its will in the world.

Some have naturally responded to this gap in domestic nuclear deployment by advocating for the funding of large-scale reactors similar to the ones that we used to build in the United States and that China is currently building today. While I believe in a vibrant and diverse nuclear sector with many form factors and strategic approaches, I do not believe that this is the way that the United States will best accelerate to meet the challenge at hand. Instead, we can use our strengths to maximum advantage and scale advanced nuclear; a technology which uses advanced manufacturing to achieve production rate and scale rather than relying on a traditional supply chain and scarce construction resources.

Advanced reactors have the ability to be inherently safe and mass manufacturable. This is our best shot at accelerating our energy generation to both keep up with the domestic energy needs for our residential population and keep costs down, but also to supercharge the burgeoning AI and robotics revolution.

Valar Atomics, we see the path ahead. We know that with fortitude, hard work, simplicity of design, primacy of safety, and ferocity of execution, we can rise to meet the energy challenges in front of us.

At Valar, we deeply believe that there is no necessary tradeoff between growth and resources. We believe in abundance: hard work and ingenuity allow us to do more with less. We do not need to pick between data centers and power prices; by putting power down on the ground preemptively and selling excess power back into the grid, we can lower power prices for communities while building the AI compute that this nation needs to be competitive.

It is an honor to share our progress and vision with the committee. Nuclear energy is the future and a bipartisan objective that will enable us to win. Before I wrap up, I want to extend a personal invite to you and your teams to come visit our Ward250 site in Emery County, Utah. It is a beautiful place building the next generation of American energy. Thank you for the invitation and I look forward to your questions.