

# LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE FORUM, INC.

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*U.S. Congress*

## **National Defense Authorization Act Continues NNSA Program re Voluntary Phasing Out of Cesium Chloride Blood Irradiation Devices**

On August 13, 2018, President Donald J. Trump signed the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law No. 115-232).

Amongst other things, the law directs the Administrator for Nuclear Security to continue working toward the voluntary phasing out of the use of blood irradiation devices in the United States that rely on cesium chloride by December 31, 2027.

The law authorizes the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) to continue its current program to pay up to 50% of the per-device replacement costs and 100% of the disposition costs.

The law includes specified reporting requirements about the program to Congress.

The relevant text is as follows:

### *SEC. 3141. ACCELERATION OF REPLACEMENT OF CESIUM BLOOD IRRADIATION SOURCES.*

- (a) Goal.—The Administrator for Nuclear Security shall ensure that the goal of the covered programs is eliminating the use of blood irradiation devices in the United States that rely on cesium chloride by December 31, 2027.*
- (b) Implementation.—To meet the goal specified by subsection (a), the Administrator shall carry out the covered programs in a manner that—*
  - (1) is voluntary for owners of blood irradiation devices;*
  - (2) allows for the United States, subject to the review of the Administrator, to pay up to 50 percent of the per-device cost of replacing blood irradiation devices covered by the programs;*
  - (3) allows for the United States to pay up to 100 percent of the cost of removing and disposing of cesium sources retired from service by the programs; and*
  - (4) replaces such devices with x-ray irradiation devices or other devices approved by the Food and Drug Administration that provide significant threat reduction as compared to cesium chloride irradiators.*
- (c) Duration.—The Administrator shall carry out the covered programs until December 31, 2027.*
- (d) Report.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the covered programs, including—*

- (1) identification of each cesium chloride blood irradiation device in the United States, including the number, general location, and user type;
  - (2) a plan for achieving the goal established by subsection (a);
  - (3) a methodology for prioritizing replacement of such devices that takes into account irradiator age and prior material security initiatives;
  - (4) in consultation with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Food and Drug Administration, a strategy identifying any legislative, regulatory, or other measures necessary to constrain the introduction of new cesium chloride blood irradiation devices;
  - (5) identification of the annual funds required to meet the goal established by subsection (a); and
  - (6) a description of the disposal path for cesium chloride sources under the covered programs.
- (e) *Assessment.*—The Administrator shall submit an assessment to the appropriate congressional committees by September 20, 2023, of the results of the actions on the covered programs under this section, including—
- (1) the number of replacement irradiators under the covered programs;
  - (2) the life-cycle costs of the programs, including personnel training, maintenance, and replacement costs for new irradiation devices;
  - (3) the cost-effectiveness of the covered programs;
  - (4) an analysis of the effectiveness of the new irradiation devices' technology; and
  - (5) a forecast of whether the Administrator will meet the goal established in subsection (a).
- (f) *Definitions.*—In this section:
- (1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—
    - (A) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and
    - (B) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate.
  - (2) **COVERED PROGRAMS.**—The term “covered programs” means the following programs of the Office of Radiological Security of the National Nuclear Security Administration:
    - (A) The Cesium Irradiator Replacement Program.
    - (B) The Off-Site Source Recovery Program.

For additional information, please see the following link to the bill:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/5515/text#toc-HE367D447CEDB4375A344CBBF76D48202>

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