



# NEWS FROM BEYOND NUCLEAR

For immediate release

Contact: Mary Olson, [gripcom2025@gmail.com](mailto:gripcom2025@gmail.com), 828-242-5621;  
Stephen Kent, [skent@kentcom.com](mailto:skent@kentcom.com), 914-589-5988; Cindy Folkers,  
[cindy@beyondnuclear.org](mailto:cindy@beyondnuclear.org), 240-354-4314

## **Citizens Groups and Experts Warn Federal Officials that Recent Trump Executive Orders Would Decimate Standards for Radiation Exposure**

***Directives would harm public health, disproportionately affecting women  
and children***

ASHEVILLE, NC, November 14, 2025 -- Over forty citizen's sector organizations including the national nonprofit Physicians for Social Responsibility have sent a [joint letter](#) to federal officials warning of public health consequences of [a series of executive orders](#) by President Trump which direct the NRC to dramatically weaken Standards for Protection Against Radiation in the US federal code. The letter points out sharply disproportionate impacts on women and children from weakening existing radiation exposure standards and calls for strengthening them.

The letter is posted [here](#). It was spearheaded by the nonprofit [Generational Radiation Impact Project](#) (GRIP) and [Beyond Nuclear](#). and sent to US Nuclear Regulatory Commissioners, Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Surgeon General Denise Hinton, and other key elected and appointed officials.

Recent Trump executive orders direct the NRC to "reconsider" the linear no-threshold (LNT) model. The joint letter argues that this "would undermine public trust by falsely claiming that the NRC's radiation risk models lack scientific basis, despite decades of peer-reviewed evidence and international consensus." The widely accepted LNT model has no limit "below regulatory concern," i.e. no level below which radiation exposure can be treated as negligible or zero-risk. Where applied, LNT takes account of proportional cancer and health risks of all tiny exposures no matter how small.

Trump executive orders direct the NRC to undertake new rulemaking and “wholesale revision” of existing radiation regulations, which would likely lead to the NRC abandoning LNT and raising allowable exposure limits.

A [July 2025 Idaho National Laboratory report](#) commissioned by the Department of Energy recommended loosening the public radiation standard fivefold to 500 millirems. In 2021 the NRC [roundly rejected](#) a petition to raise allowable radiation exposures for all Americans, including children and pregnant women, to 10 Rems a year, 100 times the current limit.

But past NRC opposition to such changes stands to be reversed by the Trump executive orders. If federal radiation regulations were weakened to permit exposures of 10 Rems a year, scientists estimate that over a 70-year lifetime, [four out of five people would develop cancer](#) they would not otherwise get.

Today’s joint letter stresses that health damage would not be evenly distributed across the population, but would disproportionately affect women and children, who are biologically more susceptible to ionizing radiation than men. And [an article published today in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists](#) cites several lines of evidence “that women and young girls are significantly more vulnerable to radiation harm than men—in some cases by as much as a ten-fold difference” and that “infants are especially vulnerable to radiation harm.”

“[NRC] bases its risk assessments on Reference Man, a model that represents a young adult male and fails to reflect the greater impacts to infants, children, and women—pregnant or not,” the joint letter states. “Newer research has shown that external radiation harms children more than adults and female bodies more than male bodies. Research on internal exposures...has not yet been sufficiently analyzed to discover if there are broad age-based or male/female differences in impact.... Existing standards should therefore be strengthened to account for these life-stage and gender disparities...not weakened. Radiation causes infertility, loss of pregnancy, birth complications and defects, as well as solid tumor cancer, leukemia, non-cancer outcomes including cardiovascular disease, increased incidence of autoimmune disease and ongoing new findings.”

In cases where cancer, heart disease, and vascular degradation including stroke are caused by radiation, they are documented at higher rates in women than in men, according to 2024 UNIDIR report [Gender and Ionizing Radiation](#).

The joint letter urges the NRC to “to stand up to the Executive Order’s marching orders to ‘promote’ nuclear power—a mission outside its legal regulatory mandate,” and adopt “stronger, science-based radiation protections.... Contemporary research shows that radiation’s impact is far greater on females, children, and fetuses—the most at-risk postnatal group being girls from birth to age five. A truly protective framework would replace Reference Man with a lifecycle model.”

"All US radiation regulations and most radiation risk assessments are based on outcomes for the Reference Man," said **Mary Olson**, CEO of GRIP, the organization which spearheaded the joint letter, and co-author of [Gender and Ionizing Radiation](#). "Young men like the Reference Man are harmed by radiation, but they're more resistant to harm than are women and children. Radiation causes cancer in women at twice the rate of adult men, while the same exposure in early childhood, will, across their lifetimes, produce *seven times* more cancer in young females, and *four times* more in young males."

"We know that exposure to radiation causes disproportionate harm from both cancer and non-cancer related disease outcomes over the course of the lifetime to women and especially to little girls, but radiation is dangerous for everyone," said **Amanda M. Nichols**, Ph.D., lead author of [Gender and Ionizing Radiation](#). "[President Trump's] executive order will allow the industry to relax the current standards for radiological protection, which are already far from adequate. This will have detrimental health consequences for humans and for our shared environments and puts us all at higher risk for negative health consequences. "

"Living near nuclear power facilities [doubles](#) the risk of [leukemia](#) in children; and radiation is also associated with numerous reproductive harms including infertility, stillbirths and birth defects.," said **Cindy Folkers**, Radiation and Health Hazard Specialist with the NGO [Beyond Nuclear](#), a signatory to the joint letter. "Exposing people to more radiation, as this order would do if implemented, would be tantamount to legitimizing their suffering as the price of nuclear expansion."

***NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: The joint letter to federal officials is posted [here](#). Sources quoted in this release are available for comment and interviews on request. For more information, please contact Stephen Kent, [skent@kentcom.com](mailto:skent@kentcom.com), 914-589-5988***

*Beyond Nuclear is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership organization. Beyond Nuclear aims to educate and activate the public about the connections between nuclear power and nuclear weapons and the need to abolish both to safeguard our future. Beyond Nuclear advocates for an energy future that is sustainable, benign and democratic. The Beyond Nuclear team works with diverse partners and allies to provide the public, government officials, and the media with the critical information necessary to move humanity toward a world beyond nuclear. Beyond Nuclear: 7304 Carroll Avenue, #182, Takoma Park, MD 20912. [info@beyondnuclear.org](mailto:info@beyondnuclear.org). [www.beyondnuclear.org](http://www.beyondnuclear.org).*