

Public Law 94-197
94th Congress

An Act

To amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, to provide for the phaseout of governmental indemnity as a source of funds for public remuneration in the event of a nuclear incident, and for other purposes.

Dec. 31, 1975
 [H.R. 8631]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 11 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended by amending subsections q. and t. to read as follows:

“q. The term ‘nuclear incident’ means any occurrence, including an extraordinary nuclear occurrence, within the United States causing, within or outside the United States, bodily injury, sickness, disease, or death, or loss of or damage to property, or loss of use of property, arising out of or resulting from the radioactive, toxic, explosive, or other hazardous properties of source, special nuclear, or byproduct material: *Provided, however,* That as the term is used in subsection 170 l., it shall include any such occurrence outside the United States: *And provided further,* That as the term is used in subsection 170 d., it shall include any such occurrence outside the United States if such occurrence involves source, special nuclear, or byproduct material owned by, and used by or under contract with, the United States: *And provided further,* That as the term is used in subsection 170 c., it shall include any such occurrence outside both the United States and any other nation if such occurrence arises out of or results from the radioactive, toxic, explosive, or other hazardous properties of source, special nuclear, or byproduct material licensed pursuant to chapters 6, 7, 8, and 10 of this Act, which is used in connection with the operation of a licensed stationary production or utilization facility or which moves outside the territorial limits of the United States in transit from one person licensed by the Commission to another person licensed by the Commission.

42 USC 2210.

42 USC 2071,
 2091, 2111,
 2131.

“t. The term ‘person indemnified’ means (1) with respect to a nuclear incident occurring within the United States or outside the United States as the term is used in subsection 170 c., and with respect to any nuclear incident in connection with the design, development, construction, operation, repair, maintenance, or use of the nuclear ship Savannah, the person with whom an indemnity agreement is executed or who is required to maintain financial protection, and any other person who may be liable for public liability or (2) with respect to any other nuclear incident occurring outside the United States, the person with whom an indemnity agreement is executed and any other person who may be liable for public liability by reason of his activities under any contract with the Commission or any project to which indemnification under the provisions of subsection 170 d. has been extended or under any subcontract, purchase order, or other agreement, of any tier, under any such contract or project.”

“Person
 indemnified.”

SEC. 2. Subsection 170 a. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

42 USC 2210.
 42 USC 2133,
 2134.
 42 USC 2235.
 42 USC 2073,
 2093, 2111.
 42 USC 2012.

“a. Each license issued under section 103 or 104 and each construction permit issued under section 185 shall, and each license issued under section 53, 63, or 81 may, for the public purposes cited in subsection 2 i. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, have as

42 USC 2210.

Liability
insurance.

42 USC 2210.

a condition of the license a requirement that the licensee have and maintain financial protection of such type and in such amounts as the Commission in the exercise of its licensing and regulatory authority and responsibility shall require in accordance with subsection 170 b. to cover public liability claims. Whenever such financial protection is required, it may be a further condition of the license that the licensee execute and maintain an indemnification agreement in accordance with subsection 170 c. The Commission may require, as a further condition of issuing a license, that an applicant waive any immunity from public liability conferred by Federal or State law.”.

SEC. 3. Subsection 107 b. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

“b. The amount of financial protection required shall be the amount of liability insurance available from private sources, except that the Commission may establish a lesser amount on the basis of criteria set forth in writing, which it may revise from time to time, taking into consideration such factors as the following: (1) the cost and terms of private insurance, (2) the type, size, and location of the licensed activity and other factors pertaining to the hazard, and (3) the nature and purpose of the licensed activity: *Provided*, That for facilities designed for producing substantial amounts of electricity and having a rated capacity of 100,000 electrical kilowatts or more, the amount of financial protection required shall be the maximum amount available at reasonable cost and on reasonable terms from private sources. Such financial protection may include private insurance, private contractual indemnities, self-insurance, other proof of financial responsibility, or a combination of such measures and shall be subject to such terms and conditions as the Commission may, by rule, regulation, or order, prescribe. In prescribing such terms and conditions for licensees required to have and maintain financial protection equal to the maximum amount of liability insurance available from private sources, the Commission shall, by rule initially prescribed not later than twelve months from the date of enactment of this Act, include, in determining such maximum amount, private liability insurance available under an industry retrospective rating plan providing for premium charges deferred in whole or major part until public liability from a nuclear incident exceeds or appears likely to exceed the level of the primary financial protection required of the licensee involved in the nuclear incident: *Provided*, That such insurance is available to, and required of, all of the licensees of such facilities without regard to the manner in which they obtain other types or amounts of such financial protection: *And provided further*, That the standard deferred premium which may be charged following any nuclear incident under such a plan shall be not less than \$2,000,000 nor more than \$5,000,000 for each facility required to maintain the maximum amount of financial protection: *And provided further*, That the amount which may be charged a licensee following any nuclear incident shall not exceed the licensee's pro rata share of the aggregate public liability claims and costs arising out of the nuclear incident. Payment of any State premium taxes which may be applicable to any deferred premium provided for in this Act shall be the responsibility of the licensee and shall not be included in the retrospective premium established by the Commission. The Commission is authorized to establish a maximum amount which the aggregate deferred premiums charged for each facility within one calendar year may not exceed.

The Commission may establish amounts less than the standard premium for individual facilities taking into account such factors as the facility's size, location, and other factors pertaining to the hazard. The Commission shall establish such requirements as are necessary to assure availability of funds to meet any assessment of deferred premiums within a reasonable time when due, and may provide reinsurance or shall otherwise guarantee the payment of such premiums in the event it appears that the amount of such premiums will not be available on a timely basis through the resources of private industry and insurance. Any agreement by the Commission with a licensee or indemnitor to guarantee the payment of deferred premiums may contain such terms as the Commission deems appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section and to assure reimbursement to the Commission for its payments made due to the failure of such licensee or indemnitor to meet any of its obligations arising under or in connection with financial protection required under this subsection including without limitation terms creating liens upon the licensed facility and the revenues derived therefrom or any other property or revenues of such licensee to secure such reimbursement and consent to the automatic revocation of any license.”.

SEC. 4. (a) Subsection 170 c. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended by deleting the phrase “and August 1, 1977, for which it requires financial protection,” in the first sentence and substituting therefor the phrase “and August 1, 1987, for which it requires financial protection of less than \$560,000,000,” and by deleting the date “August 1, 1977” in the last sentence wherever it appears and substituting therefor the date “August 1, 1987”.

(b) Such subsection is further amended by striking “including the reasonable” and inserting in lieu thereof “excluding”.

SEC. 5. (a) Subsection 170 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended by deleting the phrase “until August 1, 1977,” in the first sentence and substituting therefor the phrase “until August 1, 1987.”.

(b) Such subsection is further amended by striking “including the reasonable” and inserting in lieu thereof “excluding”.

SEC. 6. Subsection 170 e. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

“e. The aggregate liability for a single nuclear incident of persons indemnified, including the reasonable costs of investigating and settling claims and defending suits for damage, shall not exceed (1) the sum of \$500,000,000 together with the amount of financial protection required of the licensee or contractor or (2) if the amount of financial protection required of the licensee exceeds \$60,000,000, such aggregate liability shall not exceed the sum of \$560,000,000 or the amount of financial protection required of the licensee, whichever amount is greater: *Provided*, That in the event of a nuclear incident involving damages in excess of that amount of aggregate liability, the Congress will thoroughly review the particular incident and will take whatever action is deemed necessary and appropriate to protect the public from the consequences of a disaster of such magnitude: *And provided further*, That with respect to any nuclear incident occurring outside of the United States to which an agreement of indemnification entered into under the provisions of subsection 170 d. is applicable, such aggregate liability shall not exceed the amount of \$100,000,000 together with the amount of financial protection required of the contractor.”.

42 USC 2210.

Single incident,
aggregate
liability.Congressional
review.

Fees.
42 USC 2210.

42 USC 2133.

42 USC 2134.
42 USC 2235.

Survey of causes
and damages,
report to Joint
Committee on
Atomic Energy
and members of
Congress.

Supplemental
report to Joint
Committee on
Atomic Energy.

SEC. 7. Subsection 170 f. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

“f. The Commission is authorized to collect a fee from all persons with whom an indemnification agreement is executed under this section. This fee shall be \$30 per year per thousand kilowatts of thermal energy capacity for facilities licensed under section 103: *Provided*, That the Commission is authorized to reduce the fee for such facilities in reasonable relation to increases in financial protection required above a level of \$60,000,000. For facilities licensed under section 104, and for construction permits under section 185, the Commission is authorized to reduce the fee set forth above. The Commission shall establish criteria in writing for determination of the fee for facilities licensed under section 104, taking into consideration such factors as (1) the type, size, and location of facility involved, and other factors pertaining to the hazard, and (2) the nature and purpose of the facility. For other licenses, the Commission shall collect such nominal fees as it deems appropriate. No fee under this subsection shall be less than \$100 per year.”.

SEC. 8. The last sentence of subsection 170 h. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended by striking “may include reasonable” and inserting in lieu thereof “shall not include”.

SEC. 9. Subsection 170 i. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

“i. After any nuclear incident which will probably require payments by the United States under this section or which will probably result in public liability claims in excess of \$560,000,000, the Commission shall make a survey of the causes and extent of damage which shall forthwith be reported to the Joint Committee, to the Congressmen of the affected districts, and to the Senators of the affected States, and, except for information which would cause serious damage to the national defense of the United States, all final findings shall be made available to the public, to the parties involved and to the courts. The Commission shall report to the Joint Committee by April 1, 1958, and every year thereafter on the operations under this section.”.

SEC. 10. (a) Subsection 170 k. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended by deleting the date “August 1, 1977” wherever it appears and substituting therefor the date “August 1, 1987”.

(b) Paragraph (1) of such subsection is amended by striking “including the reasonable” and inserting in lieu thereof “excluding”.

SEC. 11. Subsection 170 l. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended by striking “including the reasonable” and inserting in lieu thereof “excluding”.

SEC. 12. Section 170 n. (1)(iii) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 is amended by striking “ten years” and inserting in lieu thereof “twenty years”.

SEC. 13. Subsection 170 o. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended by adding at the end of the second sentence in subparagraph (3) the words “and shall include establishment of priorities between claimants and classes of claims, as necessary to insure the most equitable allocation of available funds.”, and by adding a new subparagraph (4) to read as follows:

“(4) the Commission shall, within ninety days after a court shall have made such determination, deliver to the Joint Committee a supplement to the report prepared in accordance with subsection 170 i. of this Act setting forth the estimated requirements for full compensation and relief of all claimants, and recommendations as to the relief to be provided.”.

SEC. 14. Section 170 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is amended by adding subsection p., to read as follows:

“p. The Commission shall submit to the Congress by August 1, 1983, a detailed report concerning the need for continuation or modification of the provisions of this section, taking into account the condition of the nuclear industry, availability of private insurance, and the state of knowledge concerning nuclear safety at that time, among other relevant factors, and shall include recommendations as to the repeal or modification of any of the provisions of this section.”.

Report to
Congress.
42 USC 2210.

Approved December 31, 1975.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

HOUSE REPORT No. 94-648 (Joint Committee on Atomic Energy).

SENATE REPORT No. 94-454 accompanying S. 2568 (Joint Committee on Atomic Energy).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 121 (1975):

Dec. 8, considered and passed House.

Dec. 16, considered and passed Senate, amended, in lieu of S. 2568.

Dec. 17, House concurred in Senate amendment.