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## **Gov. Lee Designates Tennessee Nuclear Network to Lead the Nation in Nuclear Energy Innovation**

**Knoxville, TN** – On July 22, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee designated the East Tennessee Economic Council (ETEC)'s Nuclear Working Group as the **Tennessee Nuclear Network (TN<sup>2</sup>)**, the state's official partnership aimed at advancing nuclear innovation, workforce development, and economic growth across the state. Tennessee's Chief Operating Officer, Brandon Gibson, announced this designation at ETEC's annual Nuclear Opportunities Workshop (NOW).

ETEC's Nuclear Working Group was organized in 2007 and is currently comprised of 93 experts from 50 organizations. The expansion into the **Tennessee Nuclear Network** forms an even more diverse coalition of leaders in industry, research, academia, and government, dedicated to strengthening Tennessee's position as a global hub for advanced nuclear.

In 2023, Governor Lee signed [Executive Order 101](#) to create the *Tennessee Nuclear Energy Advisory Council*, which worked for more than a year to position Tennessee as a national leader for nuclear energy innovation and advancement. The newly designated Tennessee Nuclear Network will incorporate the [Council's recommendations](#) and continue the mission of establishing a robust nuclear energy ecosystem in Tennessee.

*"Tennessee's legacy of nuclear innovation positions the Volunteer State to lead America's energy independence and drive continued economic growth with safe, clean, and reliable nuclear energy," said Gov. Lee. "By formalizing the Tennessee Nuclear Network, we are reinforcing our commitment to leading America's energy dominance by creating an ecosystem for nuclear energy companies to invest and thrive, bringing greater opportunity and quality jobs to Tennesseans.*

### **Key Objectives of the Tennessee Nuclear Network:**

1. **Promote Innovation:** Support cutting-edge research and development in nuclear technologies across the industry.
2. **Educate Workforce:** Partner with workforce entities across the state who are creating and expanding training programs to prepare future generations of nuclear scientists, engineers, technicians, and tradespeople.
3. **Economic Growth:** Coordinate with state, regional, and local economic development organizations to attract investment and create job opportunities in Tennessee's thriving nuclear industry.



4. **Collaboration:** Facilitate partnerships between industry, government, and academic stakeholders.
5. **Advocacy and Regulatory Support:** Advocate for policies that support the nuclear industry while addressing regulatory challenges.

The Network will work closely with private industry and key stakeholders such as the State of Tennessee, Oak Ridge Corridor Development Corporation, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce, Roane Alliance, Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Y-12 National Security Complex, Tennessee Valley Authority, University of Tennessee, Tennessee Board of Regents, Oak Ridge Associated Universities, and United Cleanup Oak Ridge to leverage their combined expertise in ‘all-things nuclear’.

Oak Ridge, Tennessee continues to be a cornerstone for nuclear advancements globally, hosting projects such as TVA’s Clinch River Small Modular Reactor project, Kairos Power’s Hermes Demonstration Reactor projects, Orano USA’s Project IKE Uranium Enrichment Facility, TRISO-X’s Fuel Fabrication Facility, and Type One Energy’s Fusion Energy project among others. Leveraging these and future projects to expand across the state is a growth opportunity for the supply chain and other sectors such as information technology, and business services needed to support the nuclear industry.

In addition, the Network will continue hosting the Nuclear Opportunities Workshop (NOW) bringing 1,000 plus attendees from 34 states to the region annually to learn about Tennessee’s unique nuclear assets and growth opportunities.

For more information about the Tennessee Nuclear Network or its initiatives, please visit [ETEC’s Nuclear Industry Hub](#) or contact the State of Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development.

### **About ETEC**

*ETEC brings leaders in industry, academia, and government together to share information, foster collaboration, and advocate for federal missions that create economic growth. ETEC’s Nuclear Working Group serves as a collaborative platform for industry leaders to share knowledge and grow a thriving nuclear industry across the state.*

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