



BACKGROUNDER

Office of Public Affairs

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Uranium Import Ban

On May 13th, 2024, President Biden signed into law The Prohibiting Uranium Imports Act. The Act, which terminates on December 31, 2040, bans importation of certain uranium products from the Russian Federation or a Russian entity.

Specifically, the Act prohibits imports of natural uranium and unirradiated low-enriched uranium (LEU) imported into the United States from the Russian Federation or a Russian entity. It also prohibits imports determined to have been exchanged with, swapped for, or otherwise obtained in lieu of unirradiated LEU or natural uranium produced in the Russian Federation or by a Russian entity in a manner designed to circumvent the import prohibition.

Effective August 11, 2024, imports into the United States of unirradiated low-enriched uranium and natural uranium produced in the Russian Federation or by a Russian entity (which are subject to the Act) are prohibited unless the secretary of Energy grants a waiver to allow such imports.

The Act places quota limits on the amounts of LEU that may be imported in calendar years 2024-2027. These limits will be administered by the secretary of Commerce.

For a finite period, the Act also grants the secretary of Energy authority to waive the import prohibition and authorize imports of unirradiated LEU and natural uranium subject to the prohibition. Waivers may be granted, in consultation with the departments of State and Commerce, if (1) no alternative viable source of LEU is available to sustain the continued operation of a nuclear reactor or a U.S. nuclear energy company; or (2) import of the LEU is in the national interest.

Congress must be notified of any waivers issued. Waivers shall terminate no later than January 1, 2028.

The Act does not alter or affect the NRC's regulatory authority over waived imports which will be permitted under the existing NRC general import license in 110.27, General License for Imports, without the need for any case-specific NRC action.

The NRC issued a [Federal Register Notice](#) explaining the impacts of the Act on NRC licenses, acknowledging the Department of Energy's waiver process and use of the NRC's general license in 110.27, and noting NRC's plans to return (without action) any specific license applications for imports affected by the ban. The DOE published a [similar notice](#) explaining its waiver process.

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