

# **Nuclear Energy Policy in the United States 1990-2010: A Federal or State Responsibility?**

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This paper examines from a policy perspective nuclear energy policy in the United States (US) from 1990 to 2010 and questions whether it is or has become a Federal or State responsibility. The present study, as befits policy research, engages with many disciplines (for example, in particular, law and politics) and hence the contributions move beyond that of nuclear energy policy literature and in particular to that on nuclear new build and other assessments of large infrastructure projects.

Several examples at the Federal level are identified that demonstrate that the nuclear industry has evolved to a stage where it requires a focus on the power of actions at a more localised (state) level in order to re-ignite the industry. The research concludes that there remains a misunderstanding of the issue of project management for complex construction projects, and it is highly arguable whether many of its issues have been resolved. Further, the research asserts that the economics of nuclear energy are not the most influential reason for no nuclear new build in the US. The merits of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 are assessed along with the evaluation of state legislation, with the conclusion being that the 2005 Act has taken time to embed itself.

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