AMENDMENT NO._________ Calendar No._______

Purpose: To prioritize use of low-enriched uranium fuel in the research, testing, and development of a space surface power reactor design.


S. 2800

To authorize programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes.

Referred to the Committee on _________________ and ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed

AMENDMENT intended to be proposed by Mr. MARKEY

Viz:

1 At the appropriate place, insert the following:

2 SEC. ___. PRIORITIZATION OF LOW-ENRICHED URANIUM TECHNOLOGY.

3 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

4 (1) space technology, including nuclear propulsion technology and space surface power reactors, should be developed in a manner consistent with broader United States foreign policy, national defense, and space exploration and commercialization priorities;
(2) highly enriched uranium presents security and nuclear nonproliferation concerns;

(3) since 1977, based on the concerns associated with highly enriched uranium, the United States has promoted the use of low-enriched uranium over highly enriched uranium in nonmilitary contexts, including research and commercial applications;

(4) as part of United States efforts to limit international use of highly enriched uranium, the United States has actively pursued—

(A) since 1978, the conversion of domestic and foreign research reactors that use highly enriched uranium fuel to low-enriched uranium fuel and the avoidance of any new research reactors that use highly enriched uranium fuel; and

(B) since 1994, the elimination of international commerce in highly enriched uranium for civilian purposes; and

(5) the use of low-enriched uranium in place of highly enriched uranium has security, nonproliferation, and economic benefits, including for the national space program.
(b) Prioritization of Low-Enriched Uranium Technology.—The Administrator shall establish and prioritize, within the Space Technology Mission Directorate, a program for the research, testing, and development of a space surface power reactor design that uses low-enriched uranium fuel.

(e) Report on Nuclear Technology Prioritization.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(1) details the actions taken to implement subsection (b); and

(2) identifies a plan and timeline under which such subsection will be implemented.

(d) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) Highly Enriched Uranium.—The term “highly enriched uranium” means uranium having an assay of 20 percent or greater of the uranium-235 isotope.

(2) Low-Enriched Uranium.—The term “low-enriched uranium” means uranium having an assay greater than the assay for natural uranium but less than 20 percent of the uranium-235 isotope.