

OpenVoiceNews U.S.

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

Rep. Fleischmann Calls for Local Leadership at TVA, Emphasizes Nuclear Future

July 31, 2025

– Categories: Economics



Download IPFS

U.S. Representative Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) is advocating for Tennessee to take a leading role in shaping the future of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), particularly as it relates to advancing nuclear energy. In an exclusive interview ahead of a public address in Oak Ridge, Fleischmann emphasized the need to fill open seats on the TVA board with local leadership, arguing that Tennessee should have a direct hand in decisions impacting its energy and economic landscape.

Fleischmann, who has represented Tennessee's 3rd Congressional District since 2011, is set to speak at the East Tennessee Economic Council (ETEC) on Friday, August 1, at 7:30 a.m. The event will include Department of Energy (DOE) officials, researchers, contractors, and local leaders, with both in-person and online participation. Fleischmann is no stranger to the ETEC stage, having addressed the group approximately 15 to 20 times over the past decade and a half.

In the interview, Fleischmann highlighted his commitment to nuclear energy as a critical component of the nation's energy independence and clean power strategy. The TVA, America's largest federally owned electric utility, is central to these efforts. Fleischmann underscored the importance of filling board vacancies with individuals who understand the unique challenges and opportunities in the region. "We need people on the TVA board who are committed to nuclear, who are committed to East Tennessee and understand its energy role," he stated.

The TVA, which serves nearly 10 million people across seven southeastern states, has played a central role in the region's economic development and energy production since its creation during the New Deal era. Its current focus includes expanding its nuclear capabilities, modernizing its grid, and increasing reliability amid changing energy demands. Fleischmann believes the federal utility must stay ahead of the curve in clean energy innovation, particularly in nuclear technologies such as small modular reactors (SMRs).

As chairman of the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, Fleischmann plays a key role in shaping the federal energy budget. He has long been a vocal supporter of Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the broader DOE footprint in East Tennessee. His influence over appropriations gives weight to his calls for local input and leadership at TVA.

Fleischmann's comments come as TVA faces scrutiny over governance and future energy planning. While the utility remains federally owned, its board of directors plays a critical role in approving major infrastructure investments and strategic direction. Filling those board seats with qualified, regionally invested candidates has become a priority for Fleischmann and other Tennessee leaders.