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Bush Names New Chairman of Nuclear Panel

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President Bush will designate Nils J. Diaz as the new chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, replacing Richard Meserve, the White House announced Monday.

Diaz, a nuclear engineer, has been on the five-member commission since 1996. Prior to that he was a professor of nuclear engineering science at the University of Florida and director of a consortium involved in missile defense programs.

Meserve announced in December that he would leave the commission at the end of March, more than a year before his term expires, to become president of the Carnegie Institution, a prominent research center in Washington.

While new commissioners must be confirmed by the Senate, a chairman can be designated without Senate action.

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