

Statement by 350 Salem OR
Regarding SB 360, HB 2692, HB 2332

Greetings to Chair Beyer, Vice Chair Findley and members of the Committee

Thank you for providing the opportunity for public comments on SB 360.

350 Salem OR is a grassroots chapter of 350.org, a national and international organization devoted to addressing the climate crisis. We have considerable expertise on new generating technologies. We do not support allowing a new generation of nuclear plants, including the small reactors that would be allowed in Oregon under SB 360. The reasons Oregon should oppose nuclear plants have not changed. New nuclear plants are not needed for Oregon and the U.S. to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Renewable resources are fully sufficient. They are also far less expensive than even the optimistic projections for these type of plants.

In 1980, an initiative ballot measure requiring the existence of an operating federal repository for high-level nuclear waste and a vote of the people before new nuclear plants could be sited in Oregon was passed by a majority of Oregon voters.

The nuclear industry been unable to meet either of these requirements. There is near zero chance of a federal waste repository for the foreseeable future. This ballot measure has protected Oregonians from the dangers and high costs of pursuing nuclear-generated electricity for the past forty years. This protection is still needed.

Now SB 360 and its House companion bill, HB 2692, would create exemptions from both the nuclear waste and public vote provisions of the 1980 measure to allow the construction of small nuclear reactors in Oregon. HB 2332 would entirely repeal the provisions of the 1980 ballot measure, leaving Oregonians with no protection against resumption of nuclear power development in our state.

These "small" nuclear plants can be ganged together to create a full-sized nuclear power plant with the same high cost and radioactive waste problems that led to the demise of the nuclear power industry in the 1980s. These problems plague all light-water nuclear reactors regardless of their size. Because the process of mining and refining nuclear "fuel" requires a large amount of fossil fuel, nuclear energy cannot truthfully be called "carbon-free" or "clean"

Therefore, 350 Salem OR urges both the House and the Senate to reject all three of these bills in the interest of protecting both the safety and the pocketbooks of Oregonians.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 360.

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