

Submitter: Damon Motz-Storey

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure: HB2215

Dear Chair Marsh and Members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment.

I strongly urge you to reject House Bill 2215, which would refer a ballot measure to Oregon voters that, if passed, would repeal Oregon's 1980 laws prohibiting the construction of new nuclear power plants without 1) a federally licensed high-level radioactive waste repository and 2) a statewide vote in order to receive a site certificate.

These common sense laws need not be brought back up for discussion. New nuclear power development is stalled out nationwide from Idaho to Georgia and beyond. The reasons are many, but the extremely high cost of nuclear power plant licensing and construction is one of the biggest reasons why nuclear power is neither competitive in the free market nor a practical option for meeting Oregon's energy demands.

Oregon-based NuScale Power has been attempting to build a first-of-its-kind fleet of modular nuclear power plants in Idaho in partnership with the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems. Originally promising to be in operation by no later than 2016, the company has repeatedly been forced to delay the project completion date to no sooner than 2029, and the price tag has swelled to billions of dollars higher than originally slated.

Plant Vogtle in Georgia, which was supposed to be in service by 2016, is so far seven years delayed and \$20 billion dollars over budget. At \$36 billion the project is beginning to approach the levels of the most expensive publicly-financed projects in American history - on par with the U.S. highway system - and Georgian ratepayers are footing the bill without even receiving the electricity.

As evidenced by the delays and billion-dollar cost overruns of NuScale Power's Idaho proposal, developers of so-called "small modular" and "advanced" nuclear reactors have so far failed to demonstrate that their designs will be any different from the exorbitant costs of projects like Plant Vogtle. Here in Oregon, the legislature has passed a commitment to reaching 100% emissions-free electricity by the year 2040. Even if nuclear power did not pose the health and safety risks of high-level radioactive waste and meltdowns, the fact remains that it is not a viable option for our in-process transition off of fossil fuels.

It is important to also remember that Oregon has already borne the harms of the

nuclear power and weapons manufacturing industries. Orphaned high-level radioactive waste from the now-decommissioned Trojan Nuclear Plant sits on the banks of the Columbia River near Rainier, Oregon in dry casks that are vulnerable to the big Cascadia earthquake. Contamination from the Hanford nuclear site - a relic of the Manhattan Project - has impacted communities downwind and downriver along the Columbia River. Worldwide, we know that it is indigenous and aboriginal peoples who have experienced more than their fair share of the harms of contamination from nuclear waste and uranium mining, such as the Navajo Nation when the Church Rock uranium mill spill of 1979 contaminated the Puerco River.

All of this is good reason to reject House Bill 2215 - Oregon voters have much more pressing concerns than a bloated industry fed by everyday taxpayers and ratepayers that cannot meet our energy demands.

Thank you,

Damon Motz-Storey
Southeast Portland (House District 48)