

The Oregon Conservancy Foundation

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Before the House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment

Testimony of Lloyd K. Marbet Oregon Conservancy Foundation February 13, 2023

Madam Chair, members of the Committee, and members of the public, my name is Lloyd K. Marbet and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Conservancy Foundation (OCF). I appear before you today in opposition to HB 2215.

OCF supports direct democracy through the ballot measure and legislative referral process. We appreciate its function as an educational tool for enlightening the electorate on the important issues of the day. It is also the reason why OCF strongly supports preserving the ballot measure law passed by Oregon voters in 1980 and not repealing this hard fought effort, **that has protected Oregonians for 43 years** by demanding the commercial nuclear power industry firstly have a “terminal” repository for its high level nuclear waste before any further commercial high level nuclear waste is produced. **Secondly, and most importantly, maintaining the right of all Oregon voters to have the final say on whether individual commercial nuclear power plants can be built and operated within our state!**

Why are nuclear power proponents seeking to give this law another vote? Especially when the law they seek to repeal already gives the people of Oregon the power to vote on whether the nuclear industry has successfully met its obligation to provide a **safe viable cost effective energy resource**, capable of terminally disposing and safely securing its high level nuclear wastes, hopefully over the time frame of their existence.

Do we have a federally licensed terminal repository for this waste? **No – there is only “temporary” storage for a growing waste disposal problem.** Do we have a need to build commercial nuclear plants in Oregon now? **No – and if so where is the specific proposal to do so, what will it cost, what successful operational history is it based on, and where is it proposed to be sited and by whom?**

If the evidence in response to these questions exists, the law as it is presently enacted already gives the people of Oregon the ability to weigh that evidence and determine its

credibility, thus ultimately determining the level of risk voters are willing to be subjected to. HB 2215 is a clever maneuver by nuclear proponents, seeking to use a marketing technique that has long been the Achilles heel of the nuclear industry: **PROMOTING NUCLEAR REACTOR DESIGNS AS IF THEY ARE IRONCLAD OPERATING REALITIES.**

Attached is a PDF copy of “**OCF’s Resource Guide - Nuclear Power Unaffordable At Any Size**”. It contains a list of valuable resources combined with live links providing this Committee with further information addressing issues raised in this testimony.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify. The Oregon Conservancy Foundation asks that you reject HB 2215 in Committee, and allow the existing law to continue its protection of all Oregonians, now and into the future. “**The duty to survive gives us the right to know.**”

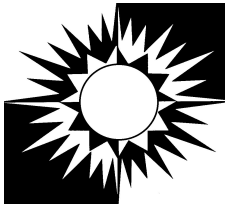
Unfortunately for those who must make far-reaching decision without the benefit of an intimate knowledge of reactor technology, and unfortunately for the interested public, it is much easier to get the academic side of an issue than the practical side. For a large part those involved with the academic reactors have more inclination and time to present their ideas in reports and orally to those who will listen. Since they are innocently unaware of the real but hidden difficulties of their plans, they speak with great facility and confidence. Those involved with practical reactors, humbled by their experiences, speak less and worry more.

Yet it is incumbent on those in high places to make wise decisions and it is reasonable and important that the public be correctly informed. It is consequently incumbent on all of us to state the facts as forthrightly as possible.

– Admiral Hyman G. Rickover - "Paper Reactors, Real Reactors" (5 June 1953); Stating they were comments from the early 1950's Rickover read some of these statements as part of his testimony before Congress, published in AEC Authorizing Legislation: Hearings Before the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy (1970), p. 1702

And the cost of a thing is the amount of what I will call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run.

– Henry David Thoreau



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OCF Resource Guide

“NUCLEAR POWER UNAFFORDABLE AT ANY SIZE”

1. Nuclear Power Plant Accidents, Nuclear Weapons Testing and radiation releases:
 - a. [“Three Mile Island - A Nuclear Crisis in Historical Perspective”](#) by J.S. Walker
 - b. [“Manual for Survival: A Chernobyl Guide to the Future”](#) by Kate Brown
2. Oregon’s 1980 Statutory Ballot Measure Law – Siting of Nuclear Plants in Oregon:
 - a. Oregon Revised Statutes [\(ORS\) 469.590 to 469.601](#):
 - b. 2/4/22 Eugene OR City Club: [Should Nuclear Be Part of The New Energy Future](#)
3. NuScale:
 - a. NuScale’s corporate website: <https://www.nuscalepower.com>
 - b. [NuScale Faces Questions on Nuclear Reactor Safety and Financing Its First Project 10/27/20](#)
 - c. [Eyes Wide Shut](#) by M.V. Ramana, September 2020
 - d. [NuScale’s Small Modular Reactor - Risks of Rising Costs, Likely Delays, and Increasing Competition Cast Doubt on Long-Running Development Effort - 2/2022](#)
Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) Updated 1/24/23:
[Small modular reactor project likely to end badly for utilities and worse for taxpayers](#)
4. Nuclear Power designated “Clean Energy” under OR and WA state laws:
 - a. NIRS: [“Nuclear Energy is Dirty Energy \(and does not fit into a ‘clean energy standard’\)”](#)
5. X-energy At Hanford:
 - a. [Tri City Herald news report on X-energy at Hanford 4/1/21](#)
 - b. X-energy - Advance Nuclear Reactors - corporate website: <https://x-energy.com/>
 - c. Union of Concerned Scientists: [“Advanced” Isn't Always Better - Assessing the Safety, Security, & Environmental Impacts of Non-Light-Water Nuclear Reactors”](#)
6. Government Subsidies for Nuclear Power as so called “Clean Energy”:
 - a. Taxpayers for Common Sense: [“Doubling Down - Taxpayers’ Losing Bet on NuScale and Small Modular Reactors” 12/14/21](#)
7. Energy Alternatives to Nuclear Power That Can Save Our Climate:
 - a. [“No Miracles Needed”](#) by Mark Z. Jacobson - also [1/23/23, The Guardian Interview](#)
 - b. [Geothermal resources offer an off-ramp from risky, costly nuclear project](#): IEEFA
 - c. [“Reinventing Fire”](#) by Amory Lovins - also [3/26/22, The Guardian Interview](#)

Nuclear is empirically slower, less certain of getting built, less certain of working properly, there are a lot of lemons, Trojan was one, and also more expensive. And therefore just do the math: If something costs more per kilowatt hour, that means you get fewer kilowatt hours per dollar, therefore it will replace less fossil fuel generation per dollar, therefore it makes the problem worse. This is really simple logic, and claiming we need everything because the problem is urgent is exactly backwards, because the more climate change is an urgent problem, the more we need to invest judiciously, **not indiscriminately**... (Emphasis added!)

– Amory Lovins, Adjunct Professor, Stanford University. [Eugene City Club, 2/4/22](#)