

## HB 2038 -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

---

**Prepared By:** Erin Pischke, LPRO Analyst

**Sub-Referral To:** Joint Committee On Ways and Means

**Meeting Dates:** 2/27, 4/8

---

#### WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) to study particular aspects of nuclear energy and submit a report by September 15, 2026. It sunsets the study and reporting requirements on January 2, 2027.

#### Detailed summary:

Requires the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) to study the following subjects as related to nuclear energy, including nuclear waste disposal from nuclear energy:

- Advantages of nuclear energy;
- Feasibility of constructing nuclear power plants in Oregon;
- How the use of nuclear energy may support current energy systems;
- Economic growth and workforce development potential for Oregon communities;
- Safety of nuclear energy and nuclear waste disposal;
- Reliability of nuclear energy;
- How the use of locally produced nuclear energy can eliminate dependence on foreign-sourced energy; and
- Use of thorium as an option for producing nuclear energy.

Requires ODOE to submit a report with potential recommendations for legislation to the interim committee of the House of Representatives on Climate, Energy, and Environment no later than September 15, 2026. Sunsets the study and reporting requirements on January 2, 2027.

- *FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement issued yet*
- *REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement issued yet*

#### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Provisions of measure
- Need for renewable energy sources in Oregon
- Permitting of nuclear energy projects in Oregon
- Use of nuclear energy in other countries
- Possibilities to study potential benefits and challenges associated with nuclear energy

#### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-3 The amendment modifies the nuclear energy study requirements; requires Indian tribal engagement in study development; and changes the deadline and sunset dates for the study and reporting requirements.

#### Detailed summary:

Requires the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) to consult with the Public Utility Commission and the Pacific Northwest Electric Power and Conservation Planning Council on the nuclear energy study. Modifies topics study must include. Requires ODOE, in developing the study, to engage with the federally recognized Indian tribes located in Oregon, relevant state agencies, and stakeholders. Requires engagement with the Indian tribes to include direct written contact with the tribal government of each Indian tribe. Requires ODOE and each tribal government to reach an agreement on a reasonable amount of time for the tribal government to respond and provide input. Changes the due date for ODOE to submit a report to January 31, 2027. Changes sunset dates for

the study and reporting requirements to January 2, 2028.

- *FISCAL: Fiscal impact statement issued*
- *REVENUE: No revenue impact*

**BACKGROUND:**

Nuclear reactors generate electricity when thermal energy is released from the fission of nuclear fuel. According to the Oregon Department of Energy, the Columbia Generating Station in Washington State provides Oregon's nuclear power and the Bonneville Power Administration markets the electricity it produces. In 2004, Portland General Electric decommissioned its 1,130-megawatt Trojan nuclear-fueled power plant located in Columbia County.

Oregon's Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) may issue site certificates for nuclear-fueled thermal power plants, but only after finding that an adequate repository for the disposal of the high-level radioactive waste produced by the plant has been licensed to operate by the appropriate agency of the federal government (ORS 469.595). If an adequate repository exists and is licensed, the nuclear-fueled thermal power plant site certificate proposal must be approved or rejected by Oregon voters at the next available statewide general election (ORS 469.597).