February 25, 2025

To the honorable members of the Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment,

In regards to HB 2410:

My name is Alison Cole, I'm a resident of Portland, Oregon. I work professionally with rocks and minerals, as an author, craftswoman, and outfitter guide. My background is in the sciences and my work takes me all over the west. My expertise is in prospecting rock and minerals materials for use in craft and sculpture.

Due to the nature of my work, I spend a significant amount of time in mining communities and I have seen first hand the effects of uranium mining and processing on community health. Any inference that small scale nuclear reactor proponents are giving you that the mining, transport, and use of radioactive materials in energy production is somehow safer than it used to be is entirely untruthful.

The very nature of these radioactive materials are inherently unstable. These substances are some of the heaviest elements known to exist in our solar system, and their propensity to emit harmful radiation that directly damages human DNA is untamable[1]. They cannot be removed from the landscape nor from our bodies. It is only with great hubris that anyone could fathom that energy production from radioactive elements is somehow safe.

If we look for nuclear energy success stories in the history of the Pacific Northwest, we find none. Rather, the few successes related to atomic energy programs and nuclear reactors in our region are related to preventing further harm to our communities, such as the 1980 ballot measure[2], the decommissioning of the Trojan power plant[3], and the Tri Party Agreement[4] to assist in the cleanup of Hanford.

An important consideration: US production of uranium is at an all time low[5]. Almost all radioactive fuel sources necessary for nuclear reactors are imported to the US from other nations who are not necessarily allies. By encouraging the development of small scale nuclear reactors in Oregon, you are directly spurring demand for domestic uranium sources which are not currently in production. Communities have battled and labored to be free of such things and now you are asking your fellow Americans to go back, to dig into the remaining uranium-rich deposits, concentrate them, refine them, and transport them into our

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[1] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK201047/
[2] https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1548&context=oscdl_cityclub
[3] https://www.oregon.gov/energy/facilities-safety/facilities/Pages/TRO.aspx
[4] https://www.hanford.gov/page.cfm/TriParty
[5] https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/nuclear/where-our-uranium-comes-from.php

state. The people who will do this work will be put at great risk[6]. Over 41,00 Americans have been awarded damages by the federal government under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act initiated in 1990[7]. Thus far, US taxpayers have shelled out $2.6 billion dollars to the individuals and families harmed by exposure to radioactive materials, and yet proponents of small scale nuclear reactors argue their product somehow has notable cost savings.

Furthermore, there is no permanent US repository for radioactive waste[8]. Contractors at Hanford have spent billions in taxpayer money trying to find a stop-gap solution to contain its own waste, which has nowhere to go. The town of Green River, Utah, a locus of historic uranium mining, lives under an enormous black pyramid[9] which caps the town's radioactive waste because it, too, has nowhere to go. In 2015, I was a guest at the Nevada National Security Site. A military guide took our group to a large blue circus tent pitched in a desert basin. Inside it, above ground, on wooden pallets, sat America's stockpile of its most high-level radioactive waste, and it too has nowhere to go. It's just sitting there under an actual circus tent.

As members of our legislature and this committee continue to pursue their interest in small scale nuclear reactors, I ask that you consider every person who this endeavor will affect, not just those in Umatilla County; the people will do the work to dig, process, transport, react, remove, clean up, and transport (once again) this evermore harmful and concentrated radioactive stuff to a circus tent in the desert. If you look truthfully into the fabric of the small scale nuclear reactor plan, you're going to find a lot of big holes.

With utmost sincerity and concern,
Alison Cole
Portland, Oregon

[6] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK158802/
[7] https://www.justice.gov/civil/common/reca
[8] https://www.gao.gov/nuclear-waste-disposal
[9] https://www.energy.gov/lm/green-river-utah-disposal-site