

To: House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment
From: Climate Energy Environment Team of COIN
Re: Testimony Opposing HB 2410, allowing a nuclear reactor permit in Umatilla County
Date: February 22, 2025

Chair Lively, Vice Chair Gamba, Vice Chair Levy, and Members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment:

I strongly oppose HB 2410. Oregonians have made it abundantly clear that we do not want any nuclear power in Oregon unless and until the waste from its generation can be safely disposed of. While new technologies for nuclear power continue to be explored, such as small modular reactors, the bottom line is this: There is still no safe depository for nuclear waste. This bill is completely irresponsible.

Are you aware that small modular reactors, which this bill would permit, actually generate more volume and more reactive radioactive waste than conventional nuclear power plants for the amount of power they generate ([Krall, 2022](#))? According to the study lead author, “Our results show that most small modular reactor designs will actually increase the volume of nuclear waste in need of management and disposal, by factors of 2 to 30 for the reactors in our case study.” Note that Oregon’s [NuScale](#) SMRs were included in this study.

It particularly angers me that HB 2410 is a blatant attempt to circumvent the will of Oregon voters. This bill would not only bring back nuclear power without a safe repository, it would do so without voter approval, ignoring **both** requirements of the 1980 Ballot Measure 7. Allowing voters in Umatilla County to make this decision for the rest of the state is beyond ridiculous, as if such a decision would have no impact outside of that county. Does Umatilla County promise to also contain all the waste their reactor would generate for the next 100,000 years or more, until said waste is no longer dangerous? Can Umatilla County guarantee that if their reactor has an “accident” (or a terrorist event), that fallout from their SMR will be confined to Umatilla County? Of course not. I live in nearby Wasco County and this is NOT okay with me.

Let’s face it. This bill is really about bowing to the corporate greed of the giant data centers and their insatiable demand for energy. How about writing a bill to ban any new or expanded data centers in Oregon? Now that’s one I could support. They contribute very little to the local economies in exchange for what they take in terms of energy and water.

Please! Just say NO to nuclear power unless and until there is someplace to safely store the [80,000 metric tons of nuclear waste we have already generated](#), much of which is currently sitting in geologically unstable storage sites. Don’t put the [profits of Amazon and Google](#) ahead of the safety of Oregonians.

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Respectfully,

Deborah Ferrer
The Dalles

Citations:

Krall, L., MacFarlane, A., Ewing, R. (2022) Nuclear waste from small modular reactors. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

<https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.2111833119>

Campbell, K. (October, 2024) The Rise and Fall of NuScale: a nuclear cautionary tale. Oregon Capital Chronicle. <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2024/10/29/the-rise-and-fall-of-nuscale-a-nuclear-cautionary-tale/>

Feldman, N. (2018) The Steep Cost of Nuclear Waste in the US. Stanford / Doerr School of Sustainability, Stanford University. <https://sustainability.stanford.edu/news/steep-costs-nuclear-waste-us>.

Sierra, A. (January, 2025) Tribes, environmentalists gather forces against Amazon's Northwest nuclear plan. Oregon Public Broadcasting. <https://www.opb.org/article/2025/01/07/tribes-environmentalist-amazon-northwest-smr-nuclear-reactor-energy/>