

Submitter: Diane Meisenhelter
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2410

I urge you to oppose HB 2410 which would exempt Umatilla County from the voter supported state wide moratorium on nuclear energy until radioactive waste issues have been resolved. The waste issues remain and have become more risky given multiple nuclear federal worker layoffs in both Washington and Oregon. First of all, this bill is at the behest of Amazon and other data centers to increase their AI driven capacity. Not only is this extremely problematic in the midst of a rapidly accelerating climate crisis , but our state needs to be looking carefully at financial and social costs of these attempts to invoke energy intensive technologies and require both transparency and accountability of data centers and initiate a broad public conversation about where this is all headed. Secondly, one county should not be exempted from important state nuclear policy because the impacts still affect multiple parts of the state. There are currently debates about transporting nuclear waste leftover from our past disastrous generation of reactors by truck. Some of these plants are being proposed along the Columbia River which will affect all communities downstream and is already at risk from migrating leakage from past nuclear waste disposal areas. Furthermore low-income and Indigenous residents in Umatilla County are already exposed to unreasonable amounts of pollution and risks. Nuclear waste is deadly and lasts for over a quarter million years and there are not safe ways of storing it and industry has a poor record of managing the storage. Transporting it to far away sites has the risks of accidents. Right now the Federal government is laying off critical nuclear workers in our state and Washington who are already challenged to keep us safe. Nuclear is the most expensive way to generate electricity which impacts low-income power rates and it takes away funding from less expensive and cleaner generation options. It saddles future generations with nuclear waste and affects poor and Indigenous populations disproportionately. It is misleading to say that it is non-emitting for during the full fuel process it is highly dependent on fossil fuels. When there are accidents the impacts are devastating. The sites also can be source of terrorism or vulnerable to nuclear weapons proliferation. There are low benefits and huge harms which is why Oregon wisely moved away in the past and should not be reopening that can of worms since they have still not resolved the problems left over from the past generation of reactors. In addition, there are only three operating SMNR sites in the world (Russia and China) and they are underperforming. Given all parts of the life cycle (from uranium mining to fossil fuel emissions used during the full fuel process), nuclear is a false climate solution and five times more expensive than cleaner renewable energies as well as being notorious for cost overruns. Given new grid and storage technologies, the concept of it being needed for baseload energy is outdated and it's development will

take time making it too late and problematic as a real solution. It diverts development work and funding from energy efficiency, cleaner renewable energies and storage technologies which are much safer and cost effective approaches. Please say 'no' to this bill and any other attempts to undermine the state's moratorium on nuclear energy.