

To: Oregon House Committee on Climate, Energy, and the Environment
Re: HB 2410
February 25, 2025

Greetings Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair B. Levy, and Members of the Committee,

I am Dr. Theodora Tsongas, an environmental health scientist with a career in public health, I am a member of the Stop Nuclear Working Group Coalition and Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility.

I oppose this bill for the following reasons:

It is wrong to propose or support a pilot project that permits the approval of one or more dangerous modular nuclear reactors in Umatilla County, a project that would be approved **ONLY** by the people of Umatilla County, the costs of which will ultimately be paid for by all the people of Oregon. We would **ALL** pay dearly for miscalculations, accidental or intentional releases of radioactive materials, and contamination of our air, lands and waters.

This project violates the 1980 law passed via ballot measure requiring a permanent nuclear waste repository and a vote of the people of Oregon **before** any new nuclear plant may be built in Oregon. In 1980, the people of Oregon made a decision about what they were willing to risk. Now the promoters of this bill and rich corporations are working to undercut the will of the people,- at great cost to all of us. (Note that, while all counties must develop community energy resilience plans, approved plans must not jeopardize the health and safety of other Oregon counties and the state as a whole.)

Because this pilot project could be paid for, in part, by outside private and public entities (entities other than the state), that does not mean that the precludes or sequelae of the project will be paid for by them. Will they pay for the management and storage of dangerous radioactive wastes at the site until such time as the operating license for this 'demonstration project' terminates? Or forever?

Management of this radioactive waste for an indeterminate amount of time, and/or finding a way to move this waste to another "interim" site may be necessary because a permanent repository has not been found and it is highly unlikely that one will be found. **No one wants to live near a nuclear waste dump.** Remember that the dangerous fuel rods from the 'decommissioned' Trojan Nuclear Power plant are still stored at the site, because a permanent repository has not been found.

How will the county pay for the management of the waste produced? Will it fall to the State and the federal government (we taxpayers) to pay for the costs of storage and management?

What will be the 'fallout' of this pilot/demonstration project on the health and safety of communities in and around Umatilla County?

What will be the 'fallout' of this project on the cultural resources and traditional practices of indigenous peoples who from time immemorial inhabited these lands, gathered foods, and fished these waters?

Aside from accidental releases, most nuclear plants release radioactive materials during normal operations. Speak with the experts. Then storage of the accumulating radioactive wastes must be managed properly to prevent additional releases, as the wastes remain deadly for thousands of years. Will the residents of the county and those downwind or downriver from the project be saddled with the known adverse health impacts suffered by Downwinders, including **birth defects, thyroid cancers, leukemia, and other serious illnesses**? Who will pay for this?

How will radioactive releases be prevented and managed when they occur? How will the health of the surrounding communities be protected? Does the county want to take this risk?

Perhaps the billionaires promoting AI and data centers, assume or hope that Oregonians are all willing to take that risk. WE WILL NOT!

SMNRs are an unproven technology, they are not small, and they are designed to be combined (hence, the name modular). If one module has a malfunction with the cooling of radioactive material, for example, the other modules will likely be at risk and will be taken off-line. How will they be managed in the event of a wildfire? It is naive to assume that they will provide 24/7 power 365 days a year.

There are many good reasons why the people of Oregon decided in 1980 to ban nuclear power plants, and those reasons hold true today - for this proposed pilot project and other proposals. The development of nuclear power would be dangerous, expensive, and a foolish way to waste our time and resources. Please carefully consider the many disastrous potential consequences of this bill and do not allow it to move forward.

Thank you for your time and attention.