

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

Dear House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment,

When Oregonians voted to ban nuclear power in 1980, we did so without the full understanding of climate change that we possess today. At that time, the choice was presented as nuclear power versus other conventional options. Now, we recognize that nuclear power represents one of the most reliable low-to-no-carbon energy generation methods available to us.

Since the nuclear ban was enacted, Oregon's reliance on fossil fuels has significantly increased. Despite our best intentions and investments in renewable energy, we continue to depend on carbon-emitting sources for a substantial portion of our energy needs, especially during peak demand periods.

We now face unprecedented challenges with exponentially increasing power demands from data centers, artificial intelligence infrastructure, and electrification of transportation and heating. While solar panels, wind turbines, and other renewable options are crucial parts of our energy portfolio, without substantial investment that our state is ill-equipped to provide these methods cannot meet these growing demands with the reliability and energy density that nuclear power can provide.

Oregon has emerged as a leader in the small modular reactor industry, one of the few areas where our state is pioneering a new and promising technology sector. Allowing this demonstration project will nurture this innovative industry, creating high-skilled jobs and economic opportunities while advancing our clean energy goals.

You will likely receive testimony stating that enacting this bill is antidemocratic because at face value it overturns the will of the people of Oregon. That assertion is false. The proportion of current-day Oregonians who voted in favor of the 1980 measure is outweighed by the millions of Oregonians who face ridiculous energy costs and climate-influenced natural disasters. By referring this measure to the people of Umatilla county you honor Oregon's democratic and home rule principles.

I urge you to support House Bill 2410 and allow Oregon to take a significant step toward a cleaner, more reliable, and more resilient energy future.

Sincerely,

Daniel DeMelo