To House Committee on Climate, Energy and the Environment
Opposition to HB 2410 and
Conditional Support for HB 2038

February 17, 2025

Chair Lively, Vice-chairs Gamba and Levy, and members of the committee,

My name is Dr. Pat DeLaquil. I usually introduce myself as an energy system modeler and climate policy analyst, but for this bill I want to state that my PhD is in Nuclear Engineering, and that way-back I worked on nuclear safeguard issues at Sandia National Labs before transferring to their solar energy division.

I will comment briefly that I strongly oppose HB 2410 as presumptive and unnecessary.

Also, I am presently opposed to HB 2038 in its current form. Although most of my career has focused on renewable energy and energy systems modelling, I have stayed abreast of the nuclear industry – and most recently conducted a technology review and cost analysis for a USAID study in 2022.

My objection to HB 2038 is that the scope of the study in not balanced or complete. I believe that a review of nuclear power is warranted given the advancements in the technology and the need for new clean energy sources, but no technology has only advantages, as this bill currently presumes. Also, technologies do not exist in a vacuum and issues of availability, development pathway and cost competitiveness must be examined in the context of a rapidly changing technology landscape.

I recommend that the study consider not only the safety of nuclear energy and nuclear waste disposal, but also the environmental and safety impacts of the complete nuclear fuel cycle. In addition to reliability, the study must also consider issues such proliferation potential, safeguards for transport of nuclear materials, as the need for exclusion zones and evacuation plans. And most importantly, the study should examine the other emerging technologies that have the same baseload power characteristics as nuclear. I particular, Enhanced Geothermal has recently experienced dramatic cost reductions leading to several new projects under development in the West. In addition, Enhanced Geothermal is selected in the modelling runs supporting the Oregon Energy Strategy, rather than Nuclear. To be useful, any study required by the legislature **must** include a comprehensive analysis of the relative costs, development risks, and operational risks of nuclear, relative to other emerging alternatives.

Thank you for listening to my recommendations.

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