

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

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed here are my own and do not reflect those of my employers or the U.S. Navy.

I'm Lucas Young, born and raised in Clatskanie, Oregon, where I've worked as an Instrumentation & Electrical Maintenance Planner at GP Wauna and served as an Electronics Technician on nuclear submarines like the USS Buffalo (SSN715). With a two-year certificate in Instrumentation & Industrial Automation from Perry Technical Institute and over a decade of hands-on experience, I've seen what keeps systems humming. A couple years back, a power outage in our remote valley cut off Clatskanie's cell tower, killing internet and phone lines—proof our grid's too reliant on systems only tied to the larger grid. If a natural disaster or attack took out our hydro-electric power generation capacity, such as Bonnaville Dam, the whole Northwest would feel it. Nuclear power, especially Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), could fix that. I've calibrated nuclear adjacent systems under pressure in the Navy; SMRs offer that same reliable, clean energy to keep Oregon running when the chips are down.

Oregon's always been a trailblazer, and HB2410's test project for SMRs is our next big leap. These reactors are compact, safe, and built with grid isolation protections, meaning local power stays on even if the bigger grid fails. At Siltronic Corporation, I designed and maintained control systems needing pinpoint precision; SMRs bring that to energy, slashing emissions while powering rural towns and cities alike. I spent four years on subs, supporting three deployments vital to national security—missions that hinged on nuclear reliability. Without it, we'd have been dead in the water. This isn't about party lines; it's about all Americans thriving. Foreign sway shouldn't cloud our vote—HB2410 secures jobs and stability, like my path from technician to planner shows. Nuclear power's a proven winner for humanity's future, and Oregon can lead the charge.

Sure, some folks here still flinch at nuclear after Trojan shut down, but ignorance fades when you work with it firsthand. My Navy time taught me nuclear's not just safe, it's essential. SMRs offer high-skill jobs needing practical know. At GP Wauna, I plan maintenance for complex setups; nuclear tech demands that same grit Oregonian have. Beyond jobs, SMRs stabilize energy prices helping our living costs while cutting reliance on shaky fossil fuels. HB2410's call for leaders to 'build on strengths' is a practical nudge to lawmakers: ditch the lockstep 'no' votes and see this as Oregon's shot at resilience and progress. Let's not let fear or outside agendas derail a no-brainer fix for our grid and our people.