

February 26, 2025

Committee: House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment

Opposition to HB 2410

These comments are being submitted on behalf of Karyn Jones, Susan Jones, Stephanie Jensen and Joanne Oman Richardson.

As residents of Umatilla County, we vehemently oppose HB 2410.

HB 2410 is an attempt to circumvent Oregon Ballot Measure 7 that was passed by Oregon voters in 1980, prohibiting the construction of all nuclear reactors of any size in Oregon. The ballot measure requires a Federally licensed repository for nuclear waste. No such facility currently exists in the United States. The ballot measure also requires a state-wide vote for approval, not just voters in Umatilla County. HB 2410 also circumvents ORS 469.594, ORS 469.595, ORS 469.597, ORS 469.599, and ORS 469.601.

The project is economically irresponsible to pursue at the expense of Oregon taxpayers. The cost estimates per SMR range up to three billion dollars or more for the permitting process, licenses, site preparation and construction. The cost estimates do not include operational costs, maintenance, staff, emergency preparedness (on-site and for the surrounding communities), security and anti-terrorist measures.

There are inherent risks with SMRs from normal operations, accidents, nuclear waste storage, and natural disasters such as earthquakes and fires. There are risks to human health, agriculture, businesses, soil, water and air contamination, and disruption of transportation routes and corridors on roadways, railroads and waterways. With the SMRs, there is potentially a high water consumption, discharge of heated water into the ecosystem, and potential bio-accumulation of contaminants through water, soil and air. Even if the SMR operated flawlessly, the perception of contamination can have devastating economic impacts locally and globally. Those impacted will have minimal financial recourse for any events that occur.

If passed, HB 2410 will set a precedence, opening the door to future nuclear power development throughout the State of Oregon.

Oregon should be pursuing environmentally safer and more economically sustainable sources of energy. These include solar energy, wind power and geothermal energy. These technologies are not only proven, but can be implemented in a more timely and cost efficient manner.

In closing, just vote NO on HB 2410.

Sincerely,
Karyn Jones