

Submitter: Ann Turner

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2038

Date: February 28, 2025

To: House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment

Subject: Oppose 2038

Dear Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair Levy, and members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment,

My name is Ann Turner. I live in Portland, Oregon and am a retired physician. I am a member of Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility and Co-President of the Board. Oregon PSR works to protect human life from the gravest threats to health and survival.

I urge you to oppose HB 2038. This bill directs the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) to study the advantages of nuclear power while failing to direct the agency to study the disadvantages of nuclear power.

As a physician, I worked at Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center, caring primarily for low income and minority patients, those most vulnerable to the devastating impacts of climate change. To me nuclear energy is an issue of environmental justice.

Uranium is mined on indigenous lands, exposing tribal communities to the long-term health and safety impacts of radiation. These include cancer, birth defects, thyroid disease and death. Accidents or leaks from nuclear plants pose these same risks to the surrounding communities, contaminating soil and water, with radioactive waste that remains hazardous for thousands and thousands of years.

Another environmental injustice is cost. While the cost of installing solar and wind has dropped dramatically, the cost of building a nuclear power plant has not dropped. Although one can make the argument that the sun doesn't shine and the wind doesn't blow 24/7, there are technologies, like batteries that can overcome that barrier and be less expensive and safer.

The cost of building a nuclear power plant will be passed on to ratepayers who are already reeling from increasing utility bills. In my practice, many patients came to me to request that I sign a form to prevent their power from being turned off because it would put their health in jeopardy. We have already seen rates rise significantly in Georgia when their new nuclear power plant came on line. Last year in Oregon, there were more customers disconnected from their utilities than ever before because of their inability to pay their bills, as a result of substantial rate increases.

We have already seen the devastation caused by nuclear accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima, the targeting of Ukraine's nuclear power plant by Russia and the costs and risks in the Pacific Northwest at Hanford. Let's study investing in safe

infrastructure for truly renewable sources of energy.

Oregonians were right in passing the 1980 Ballot Measure preventing the building of new nuclear power plants in Oregon.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 2038.