

Testimony in Opposition to SB 215

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Josh Baker, and I am a resident of Portland, Oregon. I am a PhD in political science and have extensively researched historical cases of corporate-driven policy networks working strategically to influence policy outcomes, often prioritizing private interests over public good. SB 215 is an instance of private interests being prioritized over the public good; therefore, I strongly oppose Senate Bill 215 and urge you to do the same.

SB 215 proposes repealing the requirement for an established disposal site for high-level radioactive waste before a site certificate can be issued. Radioactive waste is a long-term risk with dangers to public health, safety, and the environment. Without a proven, permanent disposal solution, approving nuclear facilities irresponsibly transfers these significant dangers to future generations.

Nuclear power is economically inefficient, slow to deploy, and poses environmental and public safety risks that we cannot ignore. Renewable energy alternatives and efficiency improvements are safer, faster to implement, and economically viable without carrying the hazardous dangers of nuclear waste. During this crucial environmental moment, the opportunity costs of nuclear efforts are reason enough to oppose them.

Additionally, removing existing safeguards allows opportunity for powerful corporate interests, potentially buoyed by heavily financed misinformation campaigns, to shape public perception and push nuclear projects forward. Given these risks and our obligations to future generations, Oregon must maintain its clear and transparent requirements to ensure genuine public protection, environmental safety, and well-informed policymaking.

I urge you to reject SB 215 and preserve the state's existing protections.

Thank you.