



To: Senate Committee on Energy and the Environment

From: Oregon Wild

Re: Oppose SB 215, 216, and 635

Date: March 5, 2025

Chair Sollman, Vice Chair Brock Smith, and members of the committee,

Good afternoon. For the record, I'm Casey Kulla and I work for Oregon Wild, which for the past 50 years has been working to protect Oregon's wild lands, wildlife, and water for future generations. Oregon Wild opposes SB 215 and 216. If ORS 469.586 is repealed, Oregon's waters, wild lands, and wildlife risk harm by the construction, operation, and long-term waste of nuclear reactors.

The past is no longer precedent for the future. Take the pilot project of long-term storage of radioactive waste in New Mexico. It seems like a decent starting point; the geology, the storage vessels, the climate, the politics. They all worked. And then. The President fired most of the staff required to run the facility, including monitoring. You might say, "what?! That doesn't fit the plan?! That must have been a mistake; we'll get it corrected. And of course, this is anomalous." That's the point: the anomaly is what we're worried about, not the thoroughly-considered and well-executed plan. We might never have considered that the whole crew would be fired, but that's one real risk—as it turns out. We are unable to rely upon the past to predict the future.

In 1976, a letter to Science Magazine noted the global rush towards nuclear reactors in response to the oil embargo and concluded that fuel reprocessing facilities needed to be brought under coordinated international control to prevent nuclear weapons proliferation. I think that letter points to a strong parallel to our present moment, only this time we have a sudden surge of *demand* for power instead of a drop in feed stock *supply*. Rushing back into an old technology, going backwards, is never the solution. A shock to our energy system is, instead, an opportunity to calibrate our energy systems to our human-scaled communities, an opportunity to seek the counsel and consent of governments like Tribal Nations, and an opportunity to seek solutions that create the least harm to our animal and plant neighbors.

In closing, Oregon Wild also opposes SB 635, which on its surface proposes Oregon State University perform a relatively innocuous study of nuclear energy. In reality, the proposal intentionally skews the details and requirements of the study to create a biased product. If you choose to move a study forward, it must have a fiscal attached, it must look at a broad array of impacts, it must include formal government to government consultation with Tribes in Oregon, and it must be conducted by a university like Portland State University that has extensive experience with community engagement.

Respectfully,

Casey Kulla
Oregon Wild