

Submitter: Sarah Chaney  
On Behalf of:  
Committee: Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Topic: HB 5006

I urge you NOT to fund HB 2410 and NOT to move it forward. Oregon should not be pressured by big corporations and investors in data centers to develop a nuclear energy project for Oregon that seeks to circumvent the will of the people of Oregon. Here are the main issues:

- 1) We must not generate any more radioactive waste until there is a federally licensed, permanent disposal facility where it can be safely stored.

“At present, the U.S. has no program to develop a geologic repository, after spending decades and billions of dollars on the Yucca Mountain site in Nevada. As a result, spent nuclear fuel is currently stored in pools or in dry casks at reactor sites, accumulating at a rate of about 2,000 metric tonnes per year.” <https://news.stanford.edu/stories/2022/05/small-modular-reactors-produce-high-levels-nuclear-waste>

- 2) Cost and time are the two most important factors in responding to global warming. All types of nuclear projects, including SMRs, fail on both counts. They are notorious for decades long delays and massive cost overruns. In the meantime, the costs of existing alternatives are getting less expensive quickly.

“All nuclear reactors in history have taken 10 to 22 years from the planning phase to operation. Recently, the range has increased to 17 to 22 years in North America and Europe.” <https://web.stanford.edu/group/efmh/jacobson/Articles/I/24-01-MZJ-HRTestimony.pdf>

Kelly Campbell, policy director at Columbia Riverkeeper, writes that ten years ago NuScale began planning to build the first SMR in the United States.

“According to project backers, a high-tech solution to climate change was on the horizon.... It seemed almost too good to be true. And it was. Turns out, NuScale was a house of cards. The UAMPS[the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems] project’s price tag more than doubled and the timeline was pushed back repeatedly until it was seven years behind schedule. Finally, UAMPS saw the writing on the wall and wisely backed out in November, 2023.

“A [recent study](#) from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis concluded that small modular nuclear reactors are still too expensive, too slow to build and too risky to respond to the climate crisis. <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2024/10/29/the-rise-and-fall-of-nuscale-a-nuclear-cautionary-tale/>

In reference to this same cancelled project:

UAMPS spokesperson Jessica Stewart said the group will look at replacing the energy output it had planned to receive from the cancelled project with “expanding a wind farm in Bonneville County, Idaho, as well as adding utility-scale solar and considering natural gas technologies that use hydrogen.” <https://www.eenews.net/articles/nuscale-cancels-first-of-a-kind-nuclear-project-as-costs-surge/>

3) Directing any of our limited state resources in the direction of SMRs carries a huge opportunity cost. As noted above, nuclear projects are notorious for delays and cost overruns.

“Money and time wasted on these false solutions to the climate crisis divert public resources from renewables, energy efficiency and other faster, more cost-efficient and safer ways to address the climate crisis.” <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2024/10/29/the-rise-and-fall-of-nuscale-a-nuclear-cautionary-tale/>

Oregonians are facing an unprecedented threat to their ability to afford basic, daily expenses in addition to health care. Please respect the will of Oregon voters when they passed Measure 7 forty-five years ago. We must not have nuclear reactors of any size without a statewide vote or approval and a federally licensed, permanent disposal facility for radioactive waste.

Profits from renewable energy projects and healthy outcomes, not the risks of nuclear projects, should go to the people of Oregon.

Thank you.