



May 22, 2017

Oregon House Committee on Energy and the Environment
Chair Helm
Vice-Chair Johnson
Vice-Chair Power

Greetings,

We, the Alliance for Democracy Oregon, oppose **SB 990**.

In 1980 Oregonians passed Ballot Measure 7, which prohibits the construction of nuclear power plants in Oregon until “an adequate repository for the disposal of the high-level nuclear waste produced by the plant has been licensed to operate by the appropriate agency of the federal government”. The measure further established that if such a waste repository is finally built by the federal government, any nuclear power plant built in Oregon would need to be approved by a vote of the people. Measure 7 has created a nuclear-free Oregon.

Now comes SB 990 which exempts “small” modular nuclear reactors from the Measure 7 requirements, despite the fact that the federal government has yet to build an adequate repository for nuclear waste.

We oppose SB 990 for two reasons. This bill is simply an attempt by the nuclear industry to sneak past Measure 7 and the will of the people of Oregon. It was introduced in the Business & Transportation Committee, instead of the Energy & Environment Committee just for this reason. SB 990 eliminates Measure 7’s mandate for a statewide vote, replacing it with a public vote only in the city or county where the small modular reactor is being proposed. It received no public hearing before the legislature’s initial vote on it.

We also oppose SB 990 because the problem of nuclear waste is the same as it was in 1980. Yes, it’s 37 years later. The facts have not changed. The federal government has yet to build an adequate repository for nuclear waste. It hasn’t because it can’t.

In 1980 nuclear waste was a substance that remains radioactive (i.e. deadly) for thousands of years. And yes, today, in 2017, 37 year later, it still is. An example: Plutonium-239, a high-level waste by-product of the fission process, has a half-life of 24,000 years, meaning it will be 48,000 years before the Pu-239 is no longer radioactive. [www.nrc.org]

Science has not developed a method to dispose of the waste safely. It hasn’t

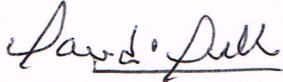
even figured out how to simply store it safely until we DO know how to decontaminate it. We already run the risk of the containment vessels breaking or eroding, allowing radioactivity to seep into our ground water & soil. Countries all around the world are facing this problem because they have allowed the nuclear power industry to build their plants even though the waste problems are well-known and still unsolved. Simply creating smaller piles of nuclear waste does not make it less dirty or less difficult to contain.

The nuclear power industry has tried to paint nuclear power as "green energy" with no carbon footprint, hence a solution to global-warming. Don't be fooled. With a radioactive footprint that lasts for thousands of years, there's nothing green about nuclear energy.

We agree with the Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility when they write "...that any new nuclear power plant system ought to prove itself before our State Legislature should even consider creating a loophole through a voter-passed law."

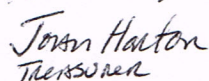
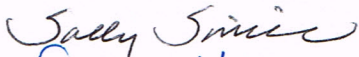
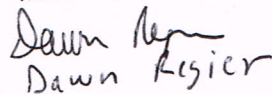
We call on the members of the House Energy and Environment committee to defeat this bill by not moving it to the full House for a vote.

Thank you,



David e Delk, President

And members and officers:


MERSOREN
Dawn Kizier