

Testimony in opposition to SB 990 – 5/24/27

Chairman Helm and members of the House Energy and Environment Committee:

My name is Dr. Andy Harris, a resident of North Portland. I'm testifying in opposition to SB 990 on behalf of Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Oregon is currently a leader in renewable energy. Development of small modular nuclear reactors is moving in the opposite direction, creating high-level nuclear waste with no available permanent repository. Let's be clear: renewables like solar, wind and hydro are generally clean energy; nuclear is dirty energy, producing toxic isotopes, some of which persist for centuries and millennia.

Whether the spent nuclear fuel is stored in holding ponds or in casts on concrete pads, it is vulnerable to terrorism from an explosive device delivered by plane, spreading lethal radiation across the Northwest.

If the United States encourages the development of small nuclear reactors, it is likely that the technology will be sold overseas, encouraging a proliferation of nuclear energy. As you know, nuclear reactors are the first step in the development of nuclear weapons, which may well get in the wrong hands. For this reason alone we should oppose nuclear energy on the basis that it will make our country less secure in the long run.

Oregonians approved a moratorium on nuclear energy in 1980, mainly because of concern for disposal of high-level nuclear waste. Little has changed in 37 years. Physicians for Social Responsibility urges you to vote "No" on SB 990.

Thank you.

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