

HB 4046 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Action Date: 02/12/26

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 12-0-0-0

Yeas: 12 - Andersen, Cate, Edwards, Gamba, Helm, Levy B, Levy E, Lively, Marsh, McDonald, Osborne, Owens

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/10, 2/12

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE), subject to funding availability, to conduct a study and prepare a report that addresses certain subjects related to nuclear energy. It also establishes the Nuclear Energy Study Fund. The measure declares an emergency, effective on its passage.

Detailed Summary:

Study Requirements

Requires ODOE to conduct the study in consultation with Pacific Northwest Electric Power and Conservation Planning Council and Oregon State University. Requires ODOE to engage with the federally recognized Indian tribes located in Oregon, meet certain consultation criteria, and submit a report to the legislature, while meeting certain reporting deadlines. Requires ODOE, no later than February 15, 2027, to provide an update on its progress on the study to the legislature's interim committees related to energy. Requires ODOE to conduct the study and consult with other entities only if funds and a balanced range of available and existing resources from federal, private, or other public sources are available.

Fund Established

Establishes the Nuclear Energy Study Fund, separate and distinct from the General Fund, with money in the fund continuously appropriated to ODOE for duties outlined in the measure.

Repeal Date

Repeals the study and its consultation requirements and the fund on January 2, 2030.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Stakeholders and Tribes engaged during bill development
- Oregon's current and future energy needs
- Potential benefits and risks of nuclear energy
- Funding sources of nuclear study
- History of nuclear energy in Oregon

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment modifies and adds study and report requirements that ODOE has to follow related to nuclear energy. It modifies which entities ODOE has to engage—and how it does so—during the consultation process. The amendment adds deadlines for reporting funds received for conducting the study, changes the study reporting deadline, and changes the repeal date of the study and its consultation requirements and the fund.

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BACKGROUND:

Nuclear reactors generate electricity when thermal energy is released from the fission of nuclear fuel. According to ODOE, the Columbia Generating Station in Washington State provides Oregon's nuclear power, and the Bonneville Power Administration markets the electricity it produces. In 2004, Portland General Electric decommissioned its 1,130-megawatt Trojan nuclear-fueled power plant in Columbia County.

Oregon's Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) may issue site certificates for nuclear-fueled thermal power plants, but only after finding that an adequate repository for the disposal of the high-level radioactive waste produced by the plant has been licensed to operate by the appropriate agency of the federal government (see ORS 469.595). If an adequate repository exists and is licensed, the nuclear-fueled thermal power plant site certificate proposal must be approved or rejected by Oregon voters at the next available statewide general election (see ORS 469.597).