

Submitter: Kyenne Williams

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4046

Dear Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Gamba and Levy, and members of the committee:

My name is Kyenne Williams and I live in Portland. I'm testifying in opposition to HB 4046, which seeks to advance nuclear energy development in Oregon by funding a potentially biased study that focuses on its advantages without including a well-rounded look at its disadvantages. In all honesty, there is a sense of déjà vu about this process: I was born in Eugene and grew up in Newport, going to high school in the early 1970s, where I was active in the 'No Nukes' movement (see "Three Mile Island"). Like nuclear weapons, I was naïve and thought we had settled these issues. Apparently not.

As a country, we haven't successfully addressed the issues below in the last fifty years and so I'm not sure why you're (re)considering this subject. Specifically, I'm referring to

- The issue of nuclear waste management: Nuclear reactors produce highly radioactive waste that can remain hazardous for hundreds of thousands of years. Current methods for storing this waste are not foolproof and pose ongoing risks to both human health and the environment. The lack of a permanent solution for nuclear waste storage must be part of the discussion if we are to consider expanding nuclear energy in our state.
- The economic implications of pursuing nuclear energy: The initial costs associated with building and maintaining nuclear power plants are tremendous. These funds could be better allocated toward renewable energy sources such as wind and solar, which are becoming increasingly cost-effective and environmentally friendly, ensuring a more sustainable and resilient energy future.

Oregon has a strong track record of advancing climate justice. We also have a responsibility to continue this momentum now when federal leadership is slashing and burning essential climate investments and safety measures. I don't want communities in my state to be sacrifice zones for nuclear disaster and skyrocketing energy bills. I am calling on legislators to stay focused on real solutions to the climate crisis: energy efficiency, renewables, and storage—not wasting time and resources on a nuclear fantasy. Please vote no on advancing HB 4046. Maybe you should all take a field trip up to the Trojan facility site, now a park?

Sincerely,

Kyenne Williams
Portland OR