

Submitter: Christina Lugo  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4046

Dear Members of the Oregon State Legislature,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any legislation authorizing a study to expand nuclear power in Oregon, particularly one that relies on private funding rather than public oversight.

The proposal to have the Oregon Department of Energy raise private and federal funds to conduct this study creates a fundamental conflict of interest. Avoiding the use of public dollars does not eliminate bias; it invites it. Corporations with direct financial stakes in nuclear development—including major technology companies and nuclear industry interests—would be positioned to fund a study that could shape Oregon’s long-term energy policy. A study financed by industry risks becoming industry advocacy, not an objective analysis conducted in the public interest.

Equally concerning is the exclusion of affected communities. Advocates proposed the creation of an advisory group that would include environmental justice communities, public health experts, clean water advocates, and others who would be directly impacted by nuclear development. This proposal was rejected as “too expensive.” Meaningful community participation is not an optional add-on—it is essential to the credibility and integrity of any legitimate study. Proceeding without it undermines public trust and silences those who bear the greatest risks.

Finally, this proposal comes at a time when federal nuclear safeguards are actively being weakened. Recent federal actions include efforts to rewrite safety rules with industry involvement, transport spent nuclear fuel across the country, and exempt certain nuclear projects from environmental review requirements. These developments heighten, rather than reduce, the risks of expanding nuclear power. Notably, lawmakers in Washington State recently halted a similar nuclear “study” bill in recognition of these concerns. Oregon should exercise the same caution.

For these reasons, I urge you to reject any study that advances nuclear power under conditions of industry influence, weakened safety standards, and exclusion of impacted communities. Oregon’s energy future should be guided by transparency, independence, and genuine public participation—not by studies shaped behind closed doors.

Sincerely,

Christina Lugo