



The Oregon Conservancy Foundation

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Before the House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment

Testimony of Cathryn Chudy Oregon Conservancy Foundation February 10, 2026

Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Gamba and Levy, members of the Committee, and the public, my name is Cathryn Chudy and I am a Board Member of the Oregon Conservancy Foundation (OCF). I am testifying in opposition to HB 4046.

This bill embodies the futility of doing something over and over again, while expecting a different result.

Funds for a “study,” whether secured from federal or private sources, cannot provide any more than what we already know. On 1/14/26, Janine Brenner (Director of ODOE) explained to this Committee that “advanced nuclear” is not identified as a “least cost” option in the Oregon Energy Strategy, and will be included as an “emerging technology” to be revisited in 4 years with regard to what role it might play in Oregon’s energy future. It is clear that at this time “advanced nuclear” is not an affordable, least-cost answer to Oregon’s energy needs,

HB 4046 is intended to clear the way for overturning the will of Oregon voters with regard to nuclear power. Nevertheless, our protective ballot measure law stands today, still valid in holding the nuclear industry accountable to the will of the people of Oregon.

HB 4046 is short term, wishful thinking that aligns with the current federal

administration's pursuit of speed and corporate profits, rather than embracing energy policy built around what is safe, available now, affordable, and in the best interest of our communities and next generations.

We urge you to look closely at the collapse of the federal regulatory system on which the nuclear industry's guardrails for public health protections and reactor safety rest. These protections matter to your constituents and contradict many of the claims being made in nuclear power promotion today.

There has been recent reporting on what is happening with nuclear power oversight at the federal level. The U.S. Department of Energy (U.S. DOE) is now assuming a regulatory function in addition to nuclear power promotion, which is a clear conflict of interest. Actions include rewriting nuclear safety rules without public input, loosening radiation exposure protection standards, and exempting new nuclear reactors from environmental review, as detailed in these recent articles:

[The Trump administration has secretly rewritten nuclear safety rules](#)

[The Trump administration exempts new nuclear reactors from environmental review](#)

At a time when our climate safety and public health protections are being gutted at the federal level, we are left to rely on our state agencies and legislators to keep unproven, costly, "advanced" nuclear reactor designs (without any operating history) from being fast tracked. Sidelining renewable energy resources and energy efficiency strategies that work is not in the public interest and betrays your Oregon constituents.

Washington legislators had a similar study bill in this 2025-26 WA legislative session, and were alarmed enough by what is happening at the federal level that they wisely stopped their bill from advancing. We urge you to do the same. Please do not advance this bill.