

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

Chair Lively, Vice Chair Gamba, Vice Chair Levy, and members of the Oregon House climate, energy and environment Committee:

I am urging you to vote no on HB 4046, the nuclear “study” bill because nuclear power is a Slow, expensive and extremely dangerous distraction from fixing our energy problems. From multiple vantage points, we can't afford to bank on nuclear. Even a "study" bill isn't worth the time or money.

1) In this extremely unstable geopolitical period, do you want to live near a nuclear target? I don't.

2) Apart from serious and long term disaster concerns, SMR reactors, like large nuclear reactors, have a track record of repeated cost overruns and delayed operation, i.e. they are too expensive and too slow to come on line. We have cleaner, safer, and more secure alternatives: solar and wind combined with storage and enhanced geothermal generation were selected as Least Cost viable options in the Oregon Energy Strategy modeling runs. Nuclear was not selected due to cost.

Geothermal generation - which provides the same type of baseload capacity as nuclear with less downtime for repairs-- has kept the full slate of federal tax credits enacted in the Inflation Reduction Act.

3) Nuclear reactors energy production must slow or stop during periods of extreme heat, and water-cooled reactors use up massive amounts of precious clean water. Oregon suffers more and more from droughts and heat waves.

4) Federal nuclear safeguards are being thrown out the window. In recent weeks, the federal government has accelerated its efforts at destroying national safety standards for nuclear development in the U.S. This includes secretly rewriting nuclear safety rules with industry involvement, exempting new nuclear projects from National Environmental Policy Act rules, and more. The federal government’s recent actions prompted Washington legislators to stop a nuclear “study” bill, and Oregon should follow their lead. We must protect ourselves.

Please vote no on HB 4046 and Keep Oregon Nuclear-Free.

Sincerely,  
Helena Birecki