

Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Gamba and Levy, and Members of the House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

I OPPOSE HB 4046 Nuclear energy “study” bill

My name is Estelle Voeller, and I live in Jackson County, near Medford. I have been active in nuclear weapons issues for 20 years, and began learning about nuclear energy due to proliferation concerns, and some common issues regarding longterm harm to humans and environment.

I urge you to oppose this bill for a number of reasons:

**Unnecessary waste of time and resources with current budgetary constraint.** The Oregon DOE’s Energy Strategy of 2025 evaluated nuclear power and concluded it is not cost effective now, but could be revisited in 4 years. Even if a study were funded by outside interests, it would still involve DOE staff time and resources. In addition, a Colorado expert testified on a similar bill last year, again confirming nuclear not economically competitive in the near future.

**Financing this study with outside private and federal money.** A study funded by industry with an interest in nuclear development would likely influence and bias the work.

**There are risks to life and health associated with nuclear energy and its fuel and waste products.** The Generational Radiation Impact Project <https://www.radiationproject.org/> has documented that exposure to radiation is more harmful to infants, children and females than to adult males (upon which standards are based), and it poses risks to future generations due to the effects on genes. Why risk radiation harm to life itself, when we have far safer alternatives with solar, wind, wave, geothermal, battery and energy efficiency technologies?

**Numerous studies have shown we can meet our energy needs without resorting to new nuclear energy.** Beyond the horrific risk of severe accidents and the intractable problem of waste disposal, nuclear energy fails the two key tests for any climate solution: cost and time. In 2008, Dr. Arjun Makhijani published his **Carbon-Free and Nuclear-Free Roadmap**, since then Mark Z. Jacobson introduced **The Solutions Project**, and recently R.V. Ramana produced his **Nuclear Is Not the Solution**. Former Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Chair Allison Macfarlane (2012-14), currently Director of the University of British Columbia School of Public Policy & Global Affairs, and who remains a foremost authority on radioactive waste, recently authored the article “Nuclear Energy Will Not Be the Solution to Climate Change: There Is Not Enough Time for Nuclear Innovation to Save the Planet” <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/world/nuclear-energy-will-not-be-solution-climate-change> . She advocated massive funding of renewables instead.

**After 50 years, we still have no long term solution for nuclear waste.** We have over 90,000 metric tons stranded at active and decommissioned sites, subject to terrorism, seismic events, flooding, and accidents. Small nuclear reactors being proposed all have different kinds of wastes, which will cause even greater difficulty and expense to properly and safely dispose.

**The costs associated with building and maintaining nuclear power plants are much greater than most alternatives.** These funds could be much better allocated toward energy efficiencies and renewable energy sources, ensuring a more affordable, sustainable and resilient energy future, in a shorter timeframe. We have not a minute to spare, as the climate crisis becomes more urgent and chaotic each year.

**Nuclear safety standards are being weakened at the federal level.** Even before the many executive orders of the current administration, the 2024 ADVANCE Act removed protection of human health and environment as a responsibility of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The executive orders we've seen this past year bode even worse for safety. Former NRC Chair Macfarlane has issued several warnings we would do well to heed

- <https://thebulletin.org/2025/07/why-the-us-must-protect-the-independence-of-its-nuclear-regulator/#post-heading>
- <https://thebulletin.org/2025/02/trump-just-assaulted-the-independence-of-the-nuclear-regulator-what-could-go-wrong/#post-heading>
- <https://thebulletin.org/2024/02/congress-torpedoes-a-biden-nominee-and-casts-doubt-on-nuclear-safety/>

Please do not pass HB 4046 out of committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

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