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QuickPoint! – Oregon Legislators Should Vote Yes on Nuclear Power

By Rachel Dawson

Oregon is home to NuScale Power, the nation's leading small modular nuclear reactor (SMR) developer. However, our state isn't able to take advantage of NuScale's innovative technology because it is illegal to site a nuclear plant in Oregon. Three bills being considered in Oregon's current legislative session could change that.

[HB 2332](#) would repeal current legal provisions requiring that there be a permanent storage site for waste and that voters approve the proposal before a nuclear power plant could be issued a site certificate.

Instead of repealing these provisions, [HB 2692](#) would carve out an exemption for SMRs and would require the Oregon Department of Energy to develop a program to educate the public about the new technology.

[SB 360](#) would also offer an exemption for SMRs. However, cities or counties first would have to approve the siting of SMRs in their jurisdiction before they could be located there.

While HB 2332 would grant the most amount of freedom for siting nuclear plants, any of these three bills would be a step in the right direction for our state.

Recent blackouts in California and Texas demonstrate that the grid needs baseload energy resources capable of backing up renewables when they fail to produce power. If Oregon officials are serious about operating the grid with 100% renewable power, they need to bring SMRs into the discussion. Legislators should vote in favor of these three bills to bring reliable power to Oregon.

Rachel Dawson is a Policy Analyst at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free market public policy research center.