

QuickPoint! - The Nuclear Comeback Skips Oregon

By John A. Charles, Jr.

On October 14, Google announced that it will finance the construction of seven small nuclear reactors in the U.S. built by energy start-up Kairos Power. The agreement will provide 500 megawatts of clean, reliable electricity to feed Google's growing need for data centers.

This follows on the September 20th announcement by Microsoft and Constellation Energy that the Unit 1 nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island Generating Station will be re-started and Microsoft will buy all the output.

These kinds of energy solutions are not allowed in Oregon because nuclear power has been banned for over 40 years. Coal and natural gas were also banned in 2021, so we have a planned shortage of electricity. It's likely that we will face rolling blackouts on cold winter nights or hot summer days in the very near future.

When state legislators re-convene in February, expanding options for generating electricity should be at the top of the policy agenda. We cannot run a modern electricity grid on randomly-failing wind farms.

John A. Charles, Jr. is President and CEO of Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free market public policy research organization.

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Please contact:

Cascade Policy Institute
4850 SW Scholls Ferry Rd.
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

Phone: (503) 242-0900
Fax: (503) 242-3822

www.cascadepolicy.org
info@cascadepolicy.org

4850 SW Scholls Ferry Road
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

t: 503.242.0900
f: 503.242.3822
info@cascadepolicy.org
www.cascadepolicy.org

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