

Kat Taylor ~ Testimony Opposing LD 601, LD 342 and LD 343 Nuclear Energy Bills

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Good Afternoon Members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee:

My name is Kat Taylor and I am a resident and property owner in Argyle Twp. This is my **testimony against the passage of three bills** regarding reviving nuclear energy in Maine.

LD 601 *An Act to Remove State-imposed Referendum Requirements Regarding Nuclear Power* is the **first step** in the attempt to bring nuclear back to Maine by **stripping Mainers of their right, by statute, to vote** on this expensive risky form of energy generation.

LD 342 *An Act to Include Nuclear Power in the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard* is an attempt to add Nuclear Fission energy to the state's **renewable energy** portfolio. Nuclear does not qualify as 'renewable', as its **fuel, uranium**, is a finite, **nonrenewable** resource. **Recycling Nuclear fuel** is 'greenwashing'.

LD 343 *An Act to Direct the Public Utilities Commission to Seek Informational Bids Regarding Small Modular Nuclear Reactors in the State* would **require an annual** RFI from the MPUC for Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and report back to the EUT committee. **No expiration date.**

LD 343 seeks to **overburden the MPUC indefinitely** to find a nuclear fission scenario that will work. The reasons fission is not feasible are **the massive cost overruns**, the **slow deployment taking years longer than predicted**, if ever, and the **waste**, for which **world leaders still have not found a permanent solution.**

How can we even **consider nuclear as a renewable energy** choice as **LD 342** would require? Putting the word "advanced" in front of ***nuclear energy*** or ***reactors*** does not make them any safer; **nor does *expanding Renewable Energy Standards to include nuclear energy*, make nuclear waste biodegradable.**

Statutory definitions of renewable energy usually **exclude many present nuclear energy technologies**, with the notable exception of the state of **Utah**. Dictionary-sourced **definitions of renewable energy technologies often omit or explicitly exclude** mention of nuclear energy sources, like uranium, which is a finite fuel unlike **wind, water and sunshine.**

The reason corporations like **Microsoft, Google, Amazon and Apple want nuclear** is to **supply energy to their AI development and data centers** (for Analytics and Crypto Currency, etc.). **Energy usage otherwise has remained flat.**

From the Bangor Daily News 12-30-24: **In 2024, artificial intelligence was all about putting AI tools to work**

"Building AI systems behind generative AI tools like OpenAI's ChatGPT or Google's Gemini requires investing in energy-hungry computing systems running on powerful and expensive AI chips. They require so much

electricity that tech giants announced deals this year to [tap into nuclear power](#) to help run them"

"We're talking about hundreds of billions of dollars of capital that has been poured into this technology," said Goldman Sachs analyst Kash Rangan. "We had this fascination that this technology is just going to be absolutely revolutionary, which it has not been in the two years since the introduction of ChatGPT," Rangan said. "It's more expensive than we thought and it's not as productive as we thought."

I am not for subsidizing corporate greed. Why should ratepayers support nuclear energy for data centers when it's been proven wind, hydro, solar and battery storage are [up to the task](#), much more available, and cheaper?

Yet, Big Tech will double down on nuclear, and risk our futures, to prove AI is worth it, despite lagging development, just to be first.

Are we really going to listen to corporations, who have invested hundreds of billions of dollars into AI; (who cannot even accomplish a *cybersecurity software update* through [CloudStrike](#) without causing [the largest IT outage in history](#)); who want to *convince us* the use of nuclear energy is now somehow needed by the public, when they are driving that need?

Tech corporations are like the Fossil Fuel industries which have misled the public for decades about the negative effects of their products. Big Oil opposed alternatives to fossil fuel based energy development to protect their bottom line. Yet, the Trump Administration has vowed to open up public lands for drilling, stopped funding renewable energy efforts, and the Tech Bros are in charge.

What we need is to replace existing fossil fuel methods of generation with low-impact, proven methods of renewable energy that are publicly-owned, locally generated, and [Colocated](#), providing Maine people with reliable, clean energy.

But there's no profit in that. There is however, major profits to be made by passing the cost of development on to ratepayers for infrastructure *we will never own*, and calling it 'renewable energy development' because nuclear would be in the state's Renewable Energy Portfolio and eligible for all the benefits of that classification.

LD 601 removes the requirement for approval by a referendum vote by the people prior to allowing new nuclear facilities. Our legislators dismiss our fears of [nuclear meltdowns](#): [Three Mile Island](#) 1979, [Chernobyl](#) 1986, and more recently, [Fukushima](#) 2011. They claim our concerns are exaggerated and we are not experts in nuclear energy so our voices don't count.

It was human error, insufficient secondary systems and lack of preparedness that caused these accidents, not the reactors themselves, making clear that we cannot anticipate the unintended consequences of using nuclear reactors as an energy supply no matter what their safety records incorrectly report.

[History's 6 Worst Nuclear Disasters](#)

Nuclear power was, and still is, unstable and unpredictable with no solutions for the waste which take millennia to break down.

Then, there are **Nuclear Weapons**.

I was born in 1956 at the height of the Cold War with the Soviet Union. My father was a wartime air traffic controller in the Air Force. After serving in the Korean War, he was stationed at [Sondrestrom Air Base](#) in Greenland, and [Loring AFB](#), Limestone, Maine https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loring_Air_Force_Base (one of the largest bases in the U.S. Air Force) as part of the [Strategic Air Command](#), the next lines of defense for the [Dew Line](#).

I grew up in an atmosphere of terror under the threat of "[Mutually Assured Destruction](#)" from **nuclear weapons that would reach us in a matter of minutes**. I learned from my father what damage nuclear power can do and **how fast it can happen**. Fear of **nuclear war and radiation fallout** is ingrained in me.

As long as we have nuclear fission power we will have the threat of nuclear weapons. Making nuclear reactors "modular" and smaller does not lessen the danger; it merely spreads the risk over a larger area.

There is a **madman running Russia who wants to bring back the days of Soviet power and threatens the use of nuclear weapons** to achieve his goals. There are **enemies of the US** and its allies **who would stop at nothing to target nuclear facilities to wreak havoc; essentially making them, dirty bombs**.

As a former IT professional, I have long believed that **our technological advances have far outpaced our moral obligations**. It saddens and angers me that **we**, once again, **are being forced into decisions that are reactionary** rather than well thought out and planned **because we waited too long to act**.

It is *pure hubris* on the part of those who are trying to force us to take up nuclear energy again in thinking *now* we can achieve success, when we have failed in the past. It was hubris that doomed Chernobyl and Three Mile Island when **plant managers claimed what was happening before their eyes was impossible**, even as catastrophe unfolded.

Lack of preparation, toothless support, ambitious politicians and exponential greed have put us in a place where ***we are considering nuclear fission generated energy as the way to save our planet***.

The irony is breathtaking.

~Kat Taylor
Argyle Twp.

*"Our inventions are wont to be pretty toys,
which distract our attention from serious things.
They are but improved means to an unimproved end..."*
~ Henry David Thoreau