

HB 434 – Enact Advanced Nuclear Technology Helping Energize Mankind Act

Good afternoon Chairman Stephens, Vice-Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Weinstein and members of the Committee. Thank you for permitting me to once again take a few minutes to speak in opposition to HB 434. As mentioned last week, my name is Lee Blackburn and I am a former member of the Department of Energy's Site Specific Advisory Board for the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant outside Piketon, Ohio. This is the facility that enriched uranium to weapons-grade during the cold war and is currently being used to produce an assortment of products for weapons of mass destruction.

Last week I spoke about the hideous and deplorable costs associated with HB 434, focusing specifically on Section 4164.04, the spending of public moneys and the taking of private lands, saying this bill could easily saddle the State and its citizens with tens of billions of dollars in costs.

I spoke as well on Sections 4164.10 (B) (1), B (2) and B (3), about the many problems and extraordinary costs of molten salt reactors; that there hasn't been one built in over 50 years and the last one had so many problems it only operated for four years.

I also mentioned how the production of medical isotopes doesn't require molten salt or any other kind of reactors, pointing to three different companies that are producing medical isotopes without using reactors.

I talked about how high-level waste reduction would most certainly entail dirty, dangerous and highly contaminating reprocessing of spent fuel rods and how the federal government has spent billions cleaning up the West Valley, New York site where reprocessing had been done for just six short years.

I spelled out how the federal government has already spent some \$15 billion for permanent storage of high-level radioactive waste at Yucca Mountain and how Ohio will be saddled with similar waste for many years to come.

I also implied this bill has been written solely for the benefit of just one organization, eGeneration Foundation, whose few representatives have testified on numerous occasions in favor of this bill and multiple previous versions over the past three plus years.

That they have an inherent conflict of interest with Mr. David Amerine being a project consultant while simultaneously sitting on the Board from which five members of the Authority's nominating council will be chosen.

That the Authority will be answerable to no one and when the bill's sponsor, Rep. Stein, was asked about this very issue by former Senator John Eklund, Rep. Stein couldn't provide an explanation.

I also quoted Mr. Jon Morrow of eGeneration Foundation who said no other state has proposed such a nuclear collaboration as that between the federal government and the state.

Then, on Friday, much to my amazement, I discover there's been an amendment put forth, not to strengthen this bill but to apparently hide the Authority and all its potential problems within the JobsOhio, non-profit Corporation, by way of the Department of Development, where it will almost certainly be impossible for members of the legislature, let alone the public, to obtain any information at all about the Authority and its problems.

I'm honestly at a loss. How does this bill benefit the state of Ohio? It certainly won't create jobs, could easily cause serious financial problems for the State, is written for a group that apparently has so little funds they can't even keep their own website up to date and has been around so long it's occupied three different general assemblies.

I apologize for my strident tone but after more than three years of this bill being around, I'm quite exasperated with its rebirth yet again.

Thank you. Questions?