

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

IN OPPOSITION TO H.B. 104, the "ANTHEM Act,"

This bill, a slim 10 pages (whittled down from its original 56) written to intentionally obfuscate its actual meaning and purpose, would put Ohioans on the hook to subsidize research and development of “advanced” or “small modular” nuclear reactors. It would create an “authority” that can spend money but is answerable to no one; give the state unprecedented ownership of high-level radioactive waste from Davis-Besse and Perry, reprocess that waste, and put liability for spills and accidents onto the state.

It is noteworthy that:

One company benefits from HB 104. The **original version of HB 104** and its predecessor **HB 771** tell a more complete story of the actors behind this bill. A single small private entity, **eGeneration of Cleveland**, had a heavy hand in writing the bill and is its major beneficiary. Language on their website confirmed this.

The intent is to build Thorium and/or molten salt reactors. eGeneration and Energy from Thorium Foundation were two organizations made up of the same few individuals. The **Energy from Thorium Foundation** became the eGeneration Foundation in 2015. Though eGeneration and Thorium are no longer mentioned in the final version, HB 104 is still about eGeneration developing either or both a molten salt or Thorium “advanced” nuclear reactor. The nuclear industry has proven itself dirty and dangerous and cannot rebrand itself as new and innovative using terms like “advanced.” No Thorium reactor has ever been built because no entity has wanted to pay for it.

Reprocessing of High Level Radioactive Waste (HLRW) is necessary to obtain the fuel for a Thorium reactor. HB 104 uses the term “recycling” to refer to a technology that adds nitric acid to HLRW, making a much-harder-to-contain and more voluminous *liquid* from which components can be extracted. Re-processing has been a disaster wherever it has occurred: **West Valley**, NY; **Sellafield**, England; **Rokkasho**, Japan; **La Hague**, France; **Kyshtym** in Russia. This is how radioactivity is “reduced” in recycling.

Major shift of nuclear accountability. Spreading nuclear research and development from the federal govt. to state entities and/or public-private partnerships is unprecedented, removing public accountability for cost and safety while maintaining all liability, as well as losing regulatory control over radioactive materials and waste.

Ohioans would pay for nuclear “cleanup.” Since the proposed Nuclear Development Authority (NDA) will be a public entity, the state would be responsible for any and all costs associated with the NDA, including reactor decommissioning, dismantling and disposal of waste and any damages resulting from a catastrophic meltdown. Ohio would also be responsible for all costs associated with high-level radioactive waste and its “recycling.”

Strange and incompatible twists. The NDA would be within in the Ohio Department of Commerce. All NDA activity would be authorized and regulated by nine governor-appointed board members. The NDA's far-reaching regulatory and commerce-promoting functions are irretrievably incompatible.

Weapons proliferation risk, dangerous comingling of military and civilian nuclear activities. The military wants to reprocess HLRW to extract plutonium and uranium-233 for bombs. **Thorium reactors would produce U-233**, a fissionable uranium isotope, as waste. This technology could be imitated and spread. See Beyond Nuclear's "*Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing equals Weapons Proliferation.*"

How about a real solution for Ohio's energy needs? Nuclear technology is **anything but "carbon and emissions free."** Efficiency and renewable energy **cost less and produce more jobs.** Jobs and the grid are decentralized, eliminating major blackouts.

This so-called "advanced nuclear technology" has been floating around the General Assembly for at least two years now and many people are raising their eyebrows and wondering whether the kind of dark money involved with HB6 (the nuclear bailout bill) has been involved with HB 104, or whether its sponsor or other legislators have any financial interest in eGeneration. It is noteworthy that the legislation does not explain why the government should boost billions of our taxpayer dollars for potentially lethal experiments.

Our energy future has no room for another generation of nuclear power plants and their bloated overrunning costs, corporate welfare handouts, health experimentation with whole populations and the natural environment, all in the name of nursing a fragile technology that can only aggravate the expense and dangers of climate chaos. At this pivotal moment when humanity must end its carbon fuels addiction, expand genuine renewable energy sources and maximize efficiency and conservation, betting billions of taxpayer dollars on a governmental nuclear chamber of commerce is beyond irresponsible; it is absurd.

HB 104 is a lethal game of Russian Roulette and should be seen exactly for what it is.

The ANTHEM Act should be rejected in its entirety.

To that end, I have read and agree with the combined Sierra Club/group sign-on letter submitted by Pat Marida, Terry Lodge and 56 safe energy and environmental organizations.