

Senator Canavan and sponsors to the following bill:

Environment and Other Legislation Amendment (Removing Nuclear Energy Prohibitions) Bill 2022

Firstly, I need to confirm this is a personal communication and not on behalf of any organisation.

On the one hand, I need to congratulate you for recognising that this current overwhelming push for renewables is ill-conceived, problematic, and will only hurt Australia's future as well as worsen the situation for biodiversity losses.

On the other hand, nuclear power is NOT a desirable alternative to head towards. I would like to address some of the components in the bill's introductory speech by Senator Canavan. The statements in italics are taken from the Senator's speech.

"Of the 20 richest nations in the world only three do not have nuclear power: Australia, Saudi Arabia and Italy. Saudi Arabia is building a nuclear power station and Italy gets much of its imported electricity from France, where three quarters of the electricity is produced by nuclear."

Italy has a very good reason for not building nuclear power: they have a major fault line running up the center of the country (and the Saudi's should be cautious as well since they are sitting on top of a subduction zone). Anyone who builds a nuclear facility close to an active fault line is negligent, reckless or at minimum ignorant. This will become very apparent in the US once their Cascadia, San Andreas and New Madrid fault zones next adjust (expected soon) as they have built dozens of plants in fault zones.

"Nuclear plants are generally characterised by large capacity and output, high capital cost, and long construction times, but relatively low operating costs and almost zero emissions to air from their operation."

Unless there is an accident and then they pose a threat to all living things downwind for hundreds of years. 'Accidents' can be defined in many ways such as human error, seismic activity, tsunami's (Fukushima), design flaws (Chernobyl), poor maintenance issues (Three Mile Island), the modern scourge of hackers - or the provocations of a hostile actor (such as what nearly happened in Ukraine at the Zaporizhzhia facility). In our current hostile world where we are very close to a full-blown third world war, any country with a nuclear power plant becomes an easy target for any aggressor who doesn't even need to possess nuclear weapons of their own. All they need is a simple device directed at a plant and a major disaster results. Perhaps nuclear might have been a reasonable option back in the 60's but the current hostile and deceptive actors 'running things' now makes nuclear a huge liability. Australia has been smart to avoid this scenario thus far, regardless of the uranium resources we possess.

"Nuclear energy is used to produce electricity in 31 countries from some 450 nuclear reactors, providing around 10 per cent of global electricity. Many nations are building new nuclear power plants because they provide reliable, emission free power."

There is a misguided focus on emissions but the focus is on the WRONG emissions. Carbon is not the enemy and is needed by all vegetation on the planet. So focusing on nuclear as way to reduce emissions is irrelevant. This fixation on carbon driven by deleterious wealthy influences overseas that Australia should NOT be paying attention to is only meant to transfer wealth - not save the planet (you can tax carbon but you can't tax the cold or solar output). I recognise that at least some of you have come to acknowledge that the 'health crisis' thrust upon us the past two years was a planned deception. Rest assured this AGW is another distraction and will result not only in wealth transfer but the diminishing of Australia to that of a 'banana republic'. Coal has its problems but the emissions that need to be controlled from coal are the dusts and

heavy metals that are dispersed such as mercury and arsenic. Are you aware that bioaccumulative fish from around the supposedly 'clean' waters of Qld's barrier reef are loaded with mercury which would have come from power plants further down the coast? Until the poor performance problems of renewables can be solved (if ever), we are safer sticking with coal and focusing our efforts into filtering out the heavy metals from their exhausts. At least if some foreign actor decides to target them, the plant will be damaged but it won't be spreading clouds of radiation throughout the southern hemisphere. (Please note I have not argued about gas - this is not our saviour either with its high levels of methane leaching, explosive nature and induced seismicity - refer to current quake swarm in Texas.) While the demand for electricity just continues to skyrocket (insert electric cars here), we can't be eliminating the only generators that will produce enough to satisfy an ever increasing demand.

"Nuclear power is safe."

Only when all conditions with the facility are perfect and no outside factors interfere with its operation. It doesn't take all that much to turn it from stable to meltdown. The more complicated the system, the easier it is to make it fail. The Three Mile Island meltdown was caused by a faulty relief valve. The explosion of the NASA Challenger mission was caused by a faulty O-ring (a little ring of rubber on a cylinder).

"Nuclear does less damage to the natural environment than other energy options. Wind energy takes up 250 times more land than nuclear power and solar takes up 150 times more land."

I agree that renewables should NOT be rolled out until the problems they create are fixed. There seems to be no due diligence being included in the rush to deliberately de-energise our power generation. But incidents with nuclear radiation can be unfixable. We have not yet invented a means of removing radiation from the atmosphere.

Also, what you have left out of your speech is the disposal issue. Where is all this radioactive waste supposed to be disposed of and how is it to be contained so that unforeseen factors (earthquakes, hostile attacks) don't disturb it? You have focused on the operation only of a nuclear power plant but not the consequences of accidents and disposal of waste. These need to be part of the evaluation and due diligence.

"The ARPANS Act regulates activities undertaken by Commonwealth entities affecting radiation, to ensure that the health and safety of people, and the environment, are protected from the harmful effects of radiation."

The only way any authority in this country can protect the people and environment from radiation that would result from a 'disturbance' to the plant is to not have nuclear power at all.

I would like to thank you for reading my submission.

Sincerely,

Deborah Pergolotti

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