Wednesday, April 7, 2026
Committee on Energy, Utilities, Environment, and Climate
Chair: Sen. Nick A. Frentz
Location: 1150 Minnesota Senate Bldg.

Dear Committee on Energy, Utilities, Environment, and Climate,

I am submitting comments on behalf of the Coalition for a Nuclear-Free Mississippi River. We are a network of organizations downstream and downwind of the local nuclear power plants. We are dedicated to educating the public on dangers of the nuclear power reactors and safe alternatives and to a nuclear-free Mississippi River.

I write to you with this message as you consider using taxpayer money or money set aside for renewable energy and addressing climate chaos to fund a study of so-called advanced nuclear reactors: I hope you will help Minnesota avoid what happened in Utah.

NuScale Power Corp. is the first company to win approval for a small modular nuclear reactor design in the U.S. With their state utility partner UAMPS they agreed to build a dozen 77-megawatt reactors. But as the plan progressed the cost per-megawatt-hour rose from $53 to $89, and subscribers began to pull out, one after another. Eventually NuScale pulled the plug on its flagship project after costs ballooned 53 percent. The deal was canceled in November 2023 despite receiving $232 million in federal taxpayer handouts from a $1.4 billion non-competitive DOE grant.

Section 1.a.2 – Technological advances with respect to conventional reactors related to safety and cost. Related to safety – the advanced technologies among the 110 new reactor designs have different cooling methods including molten salt, gas-cooled, and liquid sodium metal.

1. **gas-cooled** reactors – if gas leaks out you have loss of coolant, which presents the same problem as in regular reactor when you lose the water. Meltdown!
2. **liquid sodium metal** – **On contact with water liquid sodium metal explodes with a violent chemical reaction.** It burns spontaneously. At the temperature in these sodium-cooled reactors it will also burn on **contact with oxygen** immediately.
3. **molten salt** – Molten salt explodes when exposed to air. After a meltdown from a 1960s molten salt reactor experiment in Oak Ridge, Tennessee still has no way to deal with the plutonium and weapons-grade uranium waste.

As you can see, these advanced reactor designs are not new. The old ones have all melted down. The new ones have become too expensive. You already have the tools in the palm of your hand. Minnesota already has the best legislation by preserving the nuclear moratorium. Solar and wind and other renewables, along with conservation reduced consumption, that are less radioactive have already been tried and tested. There is no need to waste millions of dollars of taxpayer money.