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# Nuclear Energy is Bad Energy

Most people with any education in this country have studied science of one kind or another.

Ever wonder why this has been and is a requirement—beyond the sheer fascination of the topic?

It seems to me that our elders have nurtured the belief that we would need to know some science to be responsible adults. Their wisdom has borne fruit in that we consciously and unconsciously use scientific principles in our personal and interpersonal lives. Analysis of advertising is but one major area for applying scientific principles and analysis.

There are some important public policy applications of science, too. One grabbed my attention January 25 with a report in the Courier-Journal. James Bruggers reported that there is a proposal before both our Kentucky Senate and Kentucky House that would “remove a requirement stipulating that before any nuclear plant is built, there must be a permanent disposal facility to handle its radioactive waste.” A key point of information: humanity doesn’t know how to make a “permanent disposal facility” for nuclear waste. Removing this ban then would open Kentucky to further nuclear power facilities.

This citizen and this former high school chemistry teacher notes this development with grave concern.

Waste disposal has been THE enormous problem with nuclear power since Day 1. Humanity doesn’t know how to store such toxic materials for tens of thousands of years, for a starter. For another thing, we have no right to leave such dangerous stuff around for our descendants.

To be brief about a whole range of problems with nuclear power, I cite the January 29, 2008 Co-op America list of “10 Strikes Against Nuclear Power” which summarizes well the many inches-deep file of information here on nuclear matters.

Those 10 items:

1. Waste: nuclear waste is toxic for humans for 100,000

years.

2. Nuclear proliferation risk - nuclear weapons are always connected to a nuclear reactor program

3. National security - terrorist targets

4. Accidents—our younger people didn’t experience Chernobyl or Three Mile Island. Anything human is very accident-prone over time.

5. Cancer [and other illnesses]

6. Not enough sites near water sources needed for cooling.

7. Not enough uranium

8. Costs: each successive new nuclear power plant will only see its costs rise, with taxpayers and consumers ultimately paying the price—due to limited uranium supply and available sites.

9. The private sector is unwilling to finance nuclear power facilities.

10. Time: it isn’t possible to build the needed nuclear power plants in the window of time we have for increasing energy sources—10 years or less. See <http://www.coopamerica.org/>

I am not claiming to be an expert, but I am a very concerned adult citizen who is very well read on this issue. I did a lot of hard work on the nuclear weapons freeze campaign of the 1980s. This is the issue on which I began serious involvement in public policy ministry.

Granted the need to diversify energy sources and our even greater fundamental need to REDUCE our demand for energy, this proposal seems to be part of a “deal with the devil” and needs forthright opposition.

Be encouraged to contact one’s Kentucky Senator and Representative with your wisdom on this matter. Our Legislative Research Commission staff members are very gracious and helpful in taking phone messages: 1-800-372-7181.

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*The Catholic Conference of Kentucky (CCK) is an agency of the Catholic Bishops of Kentucky, established in 1968. It speaks for the Church in matters of public policy, serves as liaison to government and the legislature, and coordinates communications and activities between the church and secular agencies. There are 406,000 Catholics in the Commonwealth. The Bishops of the four dioceses of KY constitute CCK’s Board of Directors.*