



Generation Atomic
1878 Pascal Street
Saint Paul, MN 55113

April 30th, 2023

Dear Members of the Colorado Senate Transportation and Energy Committee,

We at Generation Atomic are writing to express our strong support for HB1247, which aims to assess advanced nuclear energy solutions in rural Colorado. Generation Atomic is a grassroots organization that advocates for sustainable, environmentally just energy solutions through the use and implementation of nuclear power.

Advanced energy solutions, such as advanced nuclear, are crucial for reducing the state's dependence on fossil fuels and combating climate change, each of the priorities outlined in the Colorado Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap. While these solutions have been widely adopted in urban areas, rural communities have often been left behind due to financial and logistical constraints.

This bill seeks to change that by assessing the feasibility and potential benefits of advanced nuclear energy solutions in rural Colorado. By doing so, it will not only provide these communities with access to clean and reliable energy but also create new job opportunities and economic growth in these areas. With the highest [median salary](#) and rates of [unionization](#) in the energy industry, nuclear presents an opportunity for a just transition to rural Colorado workers and their families as the state transitions away from fossil fuels. Their communities could benefit as well, as nuclear plants "[on average](#) deliver around \$400 million annually to the economic livelihood of local communities". HB 1247 and the feasibility studies included in this bill would work to better demonstrate these economic benefits, as well as the other ways nuclear can help Colorado meet its goals in other areas.

Further, as a carbon-free power source with the [highest capacity factor](#), nuclear power represents an excellent option to both decarbonize the state's grid while also making sure the lights stay on in times of high demand and extreme weather. Since nuclear power is the [most land-efficient](#) source, needing 27 times less land per unit of energy than coal and 34 times less than solar, more of these rural communities can remain wild while still having access to reliable, clean electricity.

HB 1247 has the potential to serve as a model for other rural communities across the country. By leading the way in developing and implementing advanced nuclear energy solutions in rural areas, Colorado can become a leader in sustainable energy practices and set an example for other states to follow. We urge you to support HB1247 and its efforts to assess advanced nuclear energy solutions in rural Colorado. By investing in clean and reliable energy, we can create a healthier, more sustainable future for the state and the planet.

Thank you for your consideration,

Eric Meyer
Executive Director
Generation Atomic

Madison Schroder
Policy Coordinator
Generation Atomic



May 1, 2023

RE: Support for HB23-1247: Assess Advanced Energy Solutions in Rural Colorado

Dear Chair Winter and Members of the Senate Transportation & Energy Committee:

I'm writing on behalf of Advanced Energy United, a business association of over one hundred companies representing the full spectrum of innovative advanced energy and transportation solutions, to express our **support** for HB23-1247. Our member interests include renewables, transmission, geothermal, energy storage, energy efficiency, energy demand management, electric vehicle manufacturing, fleet operations, and charging infrastructure development. Collectively, the advanced energy industry employed more than 66,000 workers statewide in 2022.

Building a more reliable, clean grid able to weather extreme conditions and variable consumer demand without exacerbating costs to consumers will depend on a variety of advanced energy resources coming together as an integrated system of strategies working around the clock. This bill will enable the state to better examine the role that clean firm resources and enabling infrastructure can play in providing grid stability and economic diversification for rural and impacted communities. These studies will also provide better insight into the myriad available federal funding opportunities from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to help these projects pencil out and unlock new revenue streams sooner.

We are pleased to see electric transmission needs included in the scope of these studies. We cannot bring any of these resources online in a timely, affordable way without sufficient transmission infrastructure. This analysis will help the state strategically hone in on where new transmission capacity is needed to enable rural communities to competitively develop clean generation and maximize high-quality job creation while managing the risk of costly overbuild. In closing, we appreciate the bipartisan leadership on this bill as a testament to the recognition that the right diversified portfolio of advanced energy solutions can benefit the whole of Colorado while being responsive to regionally-specific needs and advantages.

For all these reasons, we are pleased to **support** HB 1247 and respectfully ask for your "YES" vote on this sensible planning bill.

Sincerely,

Emilie Olson
Sr. Policy Principal, West
Advanced Energy United



Written Testimony of Kathy Fackler, 365 Blue Spruce Trail, Durango, Colorado

Senate Transportation and Energy Committee

SUPPORT - HB23-1247: Assess Advanced Energy Solutions In Rural Colorado

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to this committee.

I am a retired software engineer from Durango Colorado, a 6-year volunteer with a nonprofit, nonpartisan climate advocacy organization, and a 4-year member of Club 20. I do not speak on behalf of either organization, but my work with both groups informs my opinions on this issue. My comments here represent my own personal views.

HB23-1247 would require the state energy office to study the use of advanced energy solutions in rural Colorado as we accelerate our transition to clean energy. I strongly support that action.

Leveraging Federal Clean Energy Incentives – As a citizen lobbyist, I spent the last two years advocating for national legislation that incentivizes all the energy technologies listed in HB23-1247: geothermal, clean hydrogen, advanced nuclear, carbon capture, wind, solar, and long duration energy storage. Those bills passed with overwhelming Democratic support, and some support by Republican members of Congress.

My organization is lobbying this year on policies to maximize the climate benefits from those important investments by streamlining clean energy deployment and build-out of transmission infrastructure. We need state and local policies to meet those goals, and most of the projects will be built in rural America.

Grid Reliability – The studies outlined in HB23-1247 would consider whether firm resources are needed to optimize or stabilize a grid dominated by intermittent renewables. Like many Coloradans, I worry that a "100% renewable by 2040" electric grid may not be reliable or resilient enough for utility customers. The climate is changing at the same time our energy systems are changing, so it's best to plan for periods of extended cloud cover and low wind.

Just Transition – One study would look at ways to salvage the coal-dependent communities that have been, or soon will be, economically decimated by the policies enacted in 2019. They would look at ways to replace the tax base long provided by fossil energy, and investigate ways that Colorado's coal country could continue to produce the energy we all need using cleaner sources. Some of the federal incentives passed in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act and Inflation Reduction Act are specifically targeted toward energy transition communities like Craig, Hayden, and Nucla. Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper fought for those provisions. Colorado should make use of them if possible.

Facing Change Together – Last month I attended Club 20's Legislative Day. Elected members of this body from both parties were generous with their time and attention. Many, including House Speaker McCluskie, talked about the importance of bridging the partisan divide and the rural divide. Here's an opportunity to do that, on a rural Colorado bill that already has bipartisan sponsors in both chambers.

HB23-1247 is a logical, necessary energy transition planning step for Colorado. This bill is about opportunity - for Colorado's energy future and for the economic future of our rural areas. It's about our responsibility to the Coloradans who have produced our electricity for half a century or more.

Thank you for serving Colorado, and for considering my comments. **I urge a YES vote on HB23-1247.**