

1 **JOINT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING NUCLEAR**

2 **POWER**

3 2009 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: David P. Hinkins**

6 House Sponsor: _____

7

LONG TITLE

8 **General Description:**

9
10 This joint resolution of the Legislature expresses support for new nuclear power
11 development in Utah.

12 **Highlighted Provisions:**

13 This resolution:

- 14 ▶ encourages that new nuclear power development be pursued in Utah due to its
- 15 impeccable safety and security record;
- 16 ▶ declares that nuclear power has been shown to be a viable cost effective option, that
- 17 current rate payer protection laws and regulations are sufficient, and that no new
- 18 legislation or special action is needed for the Public Service Commission to
- 19 recognize nuclear power as a prudent investment;
- 20 ▶ expresses appreciation to the merchant nuclear power developers for not requesting
- 21 taxpayer subsidies, incentives, or other mechanisms to artificially lower electric
- 22 costs by taxpayer funds;
- 23 ▶ declares that no appropriations for special committees or programs are needed to
- 24 determine whether nuclear power can be built in Utah;
- 25 ▶ encourages all investor-owned and municipally owned utilities and power marketers
- 26 and traders to consider participating in a nuclear power project in Utah; and
- 27 ▶ recognizes commercial nuclear power plants as a market-based, commercially



28 competitive enterprise.

29 **Special Clauses:**

30 None

31

32 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

33 WHEREAS, Utah and the surrounding western states have experienced increased new
34 electricity demands and have forecasted continued increases over the next several decades;

35 WHEREAS, Utah requires affordable and abundant energy for homes and businesses to
36 maintain and grow its economy;

37 WHEREAS, Utah and the surrounding areas will likely suffer significant financial
38 difficulties without new reliable and affordable electric generating resources being built, adding
39 to and prolonging the depressed economy;

40 WHEREAS, Utah enjoys and continues to rely on cost effective coal fired power plants
41 for 85% of its electric generation;

42 WHEREAS, Utah effectively cannot build any new significant coal fired power plants
43 because Utah's air shed fails emission modeling requirements for new air permits issued under
44 regulations from the Environmental Protection Agency;

45 WHEREAS, new emission controls, carbon capture technology, carbon sequestration,
46 and advance coal combustion technologies should be encouraged, but are not projected to be
47 commercially feasible and cost effective for at least 25 years;

48 WHEREAS, the Utah Public Service Commission has determined that new natural gas
49 electric generation increases the volatility of retail electric prices and retail natural gas prices;

50 WHEREAS, hydro power resources are constrained and not expected to expand in
51 capacity;

52 WHEREAS, according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), renewable
53 resources such as wind, geothermal, and solar, as important as they are, presently account for
54 only 2.5% of the nation's total generating capacity and accounted for .4% of Utah's generating
55 capacity in 2007;

56 WHEREAS, according to the EIA, renewables are projected to comprise only
57 approximately 5% of generating resources in the next ten years and have little or no ability to
58 provide electric baseload generation, regardless of how much of the renewable resources can be

59 developed, and require backup absent compatible energy storage capabilities;

60 WHEREAS, renewable resources are currently the highest publicly subsidized and least
61 cost effective electric generation resource;

62 WHEREAS, according to the EIA, renewables are annually subsidized by 4.8 billion
63 dollars in taxpayer dollars, the largest and highest subsidy from taxpayers of any generating
64 resource, for about 35% of its generation cost;

65 WHEREAS, renewables are 20 to 50 times more subsidized than other generating
66 resources;

67 WHEREAS, Utah has very few options to meet significant new baseload growth, is
68 vulnerable to price volatility, and has a significant need to diversify its cost effective electric
69 generation resources;

70 WHEREAS, the electrification of Utah and America is one of the most effective and
71 realistic means, if not the only one presently, to reduce dependence on imported hydrocarbons;

72 WHEREAS, nationwide nuclear power provides low cost, long term, stable retail and
73 wholesale pricing for customers;

74 WHEREAS, the United States Congress and the United States Nuclear Regulatory
75 Commission worked together to improve the old process for licensing new nuclear power
76 plants;

77 WHEREAS, the new nuclear power plant licensing process presently includes a "one
78 step" Combined Operating License (COL) procedure, which combines construction and
79 operating license applications and reviews into a single process;

80 WHEREAS, the new licensing process is more efficient, predictable, and reliable;

81 WHEREAS, three Early Site Permits (ESP) for new nuclear plants, one of the new
82 licensing processes now in place, have been issued with little or no delays from adjudication;

83 WHEREAS, the estimated time frame to complete a new nuclear COL is five years;

84 WHEREAS, the development of nuclear power plants will provide significant
85 economic benefits to the local, regional, and state populations in the form of many high paying
86 jobs and additional tax revenues;

87 WHEREAS, the construction of a new nuclear facility would inject billion of dollars
88 into Utah's economy in the form of 3,500 construction jobs during a two unit construction
89 period spanning up to seven years;

90 WHEREAS, operations of two new generation units would provide about 800 jobs for
91 highly skilled workers over the plant's 60 year projected lifetime;

92 WHEREAS, the needed regulatory and legal framework to deploy safe, secure, and cost
93 competitive nuclear power in Utah is in place;

94 WHEREAS, Utah already has a nuclear reactor at the University of Utah;

95 WHEREAS, the University of Utah Training Research and Isotope Production, General
96 Atomics (TRIGA) research reactor in Salt Lake City has been operating safely since 1975;

97 WHEREAS, the United States' nuclear industry has accumulated almost 3,400 reactor
98 years of operation since the first plant started up in 1957 without serious injury or death to a
99 single member of the public;

100 WHEREAS, the current practice of storing spent fuel in wet or dry storage containers at
101 a nuclear power plant has been proven safe since commercial nuclear power began in 1957;

102 WHEREAS, 95% of the energy from a nuclear reactor's spent fuel remains has
103 significant value and can be reprocessed or recycled for use as fuel in the future when this
104 option is commercialized in the United States;

105 WHEREAS, spent fuel from a nuclear reactor is valuable;

106 WHEREAS, France, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and Germany currently
107 recycle or reprocess spent fuel successfully; and

108 WHEREAS, there is no scientific or safety rationale requiring the near term movement
109 of spent fuel from the power plants where it is generated and fuel can be safely and securely
110 stored on site for up to 100 years without environmental impacts:

111 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
112 urges that new nuclear power development be pursued within the boundaries of the state of
113 Utah.

114 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature urges that commercial development
115 of new nuclear power be pursued in the state because of its impeccable safety and security
116 record, in particular the fact that no member of the public has been seriously injured by
117 operation of the 104 nuclear power plants in the United States.

118 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature declares that nuclear power has
119 been shown to be a viable cost effective option, that current rate payer protection laws and
120 regulations are sufficient, and that no new legislation or special action is needed for the Public

121 Service Commission to recognize nuclear power as a prudent investment.

122 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature expresses its appreciation and
123 admiration to the merchant nuclear power developers for not asking the citizens of Utah to
124 provide taxpayer subsidies, incentives, or other mechanisms to artificially lower electric costs
125 by taxpayer funds.

126 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature recognizes that no appropriations
127 are needed for special committees or programs to determine whether nuclear power can be built
128 in Utah because the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission will review and adjudicate
129 the licensing, as needed, and nuclear developers will pay for those costs.

130 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature encourages investor-owned and
131 municipally owned utilities and power marketers and traders to consider participating in a
132 nuclear power project in Utah.

133 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature recognizes commercial nuclear
134 power plants as market-based, commercially competitive enterprises due to their safety and
135 security record, the science and performance data, and the economic performance of the present
136 power plants.

137 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the President of
138 the United States, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United
139 States House of Representatives, the United States Secretary of Energy, Governor Huntsman,
140 and to the members of Utah's congressional delegation.

Legislative Review Note
as of 2-10-09 7:34 AM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

S.J.R. 16 - Joint Resolution Supporting Nuclear Power

Fiscal Note

2009 General Session

State of Utah

State Impact

Enactment of this bill will not require additional appropriations.

Individual, Business and/or Local Impact

Enactment of this bill likely will not result in direct, measurable costs and/or benefits for individuals, businesses, or local governments.
