

There is growing interest in nuclear energy as a solution to climate change.  
The National Radioactive Waste Coalition argues that

## **nuclear energy is NOT a climate solution.**

### **Fact #1: Nuclear energy has a large carbon footprint.**

- Uranium mining, milling, plant construction, and fuel enrichment are energy intensive.
- During operation, carbon is emitted through the release of heat and water vapor.
- Decommissioning is a carbon-intensive process as equipment and buildings are dismantled and transported to disposal sites over a period of 60 years or longer.

### **Fact #2: Nuclear energy is not clean, and it is dangerous.**

- Radiation is released into the air and water as a routine part of operation. There are also uncontrolled discharges of potent greenhouse gases. Accidents happen. Remember Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima.
- There remains no safe, just, permanent solution for the isolation of over 80,000 metric tons of high-level radioactive waste for the million years that it will remain lethal.
- Nuclear facilities are vulnerable targets of terrorism.

### **Fact #3: Nuclear energy is not reliable in a climate disrupted world; its demands on water are not compatible with a warming planet.**

- Under global warming conditions, water is fast becoming a precious commodity. Reactors consume billions of gallons of water daily and return heated water which undermines our waterways and destroys aquatic life.
- During droughts and heatwaves, nuclear plant cooling efficiency requires it to power down or even shut down altogether.
- Water levels are rising. Many of the nuclear plants located along waterways will eventually become submerged, making the plants inoperable and the stored radioactive waste even more vulnerable. Remember Fukushima.

### **Fact #4: Nuclear energy is too expensive.**

- Nuclear energy is at least three times as expensive to produce as solar or wind, and the price of renewables continues to drop while the cost for nuclear continues to rise.
- Only through tax-payer subsidies is the nuclear industry able to survive.

### **Fact #5: Nuclear energy impedes the development of truly clean energy sources.**

- What is needed is an efficient, responsive, and flexible grid to respond to energy demands. Baseload power generators such as nuclear cannot adapt to changing demands.

### **Fact #6: It would take too long to build enough nuclear plants to make any impact on our climate.**

- One reactor would need to be built every two weeks for the next 35 years in order to have any effect.
- It takes 10 to 20 years to plan and build one nuclear reactor. Solar and wind projects take two to five years to come online.

*Nuclear is just not up to that task. From everything I've seen and experienced with this industry, I think that's a fool's errand, and I think it's gonna fail the planet when it comes to dealing with climate change... There are other solutions. There are better, cheaper, faster solutions that are out there, and that's where we need to focus our energy and our time. Former NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko, 'Rogue' regulator says nuclear is no climate panacea," E&E News, January 25, 2019.*