

“Don’t Overturn the Will of the People!”

Statewide Coalition Representing Tens of Thousands of Massachusetts Voters Demands Protection of 1982 Nuclear Referendum Law Under Repeal by Governor Healey through legislation

TIME-SENSITIVE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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When: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 1:00 PM

Where: Massachusetts State House Room 2-A

What: Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy hearing on H.4144, An Act relative to energy affordability, independence and innovation

Boston, MA—From Provincetown to Mount Washington, from Williamstown to Nantucket, [67 percent of Massachusetts voted in 1982 to require citizen approval of any new nuclear power plant built in the Commonwealth.](#)

Now, Section 45 of H.4144—Governor Healey’s energy bill called “[An Act relative to energy affordability, independence and innovation](#)”—proposes to repeal that landmark and landslide vote in Section 45. But safe energy activists from grassroots organizations working in coalition are urging the Committee to strip the bill of Section 45 and call on their senators and representatives to oppose that provision. Groups from across the state joined forces to protect citizens’ right to determine their energy future.

With reactors potentially being used as bargaining chips in war zones, no solution for its escalating radioactive waste problem, and its repeated taxpayer-funded bailouts, the people of the Commonwealth have good reasons for wanting the referendum on future nuclear power to remain in place.

“This is a meltdown in democracy,” said Deb Katz of the Citizens Awareness Network (CAN). “When peoples’ rights are threatened just for dissenting,

how can legislators eviscerate our democratic right to determine our energy future? We will clearly tell them that this is unacceptable.”

Katz and others will testify at a Massachusetts Senate hearing on the bill Wednesday, June 25 at 1 p.m., at the State House with a livestream option. Written public comments must be submitted by 5 p.m. EDT July 2. To submit testimony or attend the hearing, please visit <https://malegislature.gov/Events/Hearings/Detail/5241>

“We will mobilize opposition to this backhanded attempt to subvert democracy and remove safeguards protecting against a dangerous, expensive, and unnecessary failed technology,” said Shel Horowitz of the Clamshell Alliance.

“Is this yet another challenge to our fragile democracy?” asked Diane Turco of Cape Downwinders, “While we recognize the importance of advancing energy solutions to combat climate change, it should not come at the cost of sidelining democratic principles. Encouraging transparency, inclusivity, and dialogue in public policy fosters trust and yields decisions richer in perspective and oversight. The Joint Committee must remove Section 45 and keep democracy alive.”

“It is absurd to consider abrogating the People's referendum and building SMRs [small modular reactors] in Massachusetts at huge cost to ratepayers,” said Claire Chang of Greenfield Solar. “That money is better spent on energy efficiency, decarbonization, renewable energy and storage,” she continued.

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