

## Cooper Freeman

There never has, and never will be, a good solution to mining or disposing of uranium. Mining uranium is a very toxic process, destructive to the environment, wildlife, waterways, and people. Most uranium mines are on native lands, and thus have an outsized and unjust impact on native communities. Uranium that no longer can be used in the reactor will last as an incredibly toxic and dangerous substance for thousands of years, well past the timeframe any government could reasonably plan to be responsible for its safekeeping. What happens when governments shift and that material gets in the hands of a threat to society? Like mining, nuclear waste storage often takes place on native lands, further increasing the unjust burden and impacts on native communities from nuclear energy. Operating a nuclear microreactor is not without risks, including very significant risks. There are myriad alternative solutions, some available now and some available soon which far fewer short and long term persistent risks. Nuclear is never safe, and there is no reasonable plan to keep nuclear material safe for the entirety of its dangerous and toxic lifespan once mined. For these and many other reasons, I urge the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to reject the development of nuclear microreactors in Alaska.