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As a lifelong Alaskan resident I understand the energy problems our State faces, but micronuclear reactors are not the solution we need. Nuclear energy is dirty, the tailings from mining are a permanent hazard that is seldom cleaned up properly, processing plants have had accidents and leaks, transportation of fissible material has resulted in missing sources in the past, and all of this risk occurs before energy generation even begins. Spent nuclear fuel needs to be stored safely for countless generations, burdening humanity forever, and there is still no long term storage sites in North America. These problems cannot simply be ignored when considering nuclear power.

Having read other comments, I notice in several references to Senate Bill 177, and an accompanying a request for the DEC to minimize their role in siting reactors. I humbly request that your department do the opposite.

Alaska has a long history of disrespecting Tribal sovereignty at every level of government. The numerous contaminated sites from Federal, State, and military installations act as a lasting reminder of this harm. Leaving siting decisions to the discretion of local authorities who have received Federal and State approval risks this same pattern being repeated. Communities across the State are still dealing with contaminated groundwater, oil leaks, mine tailing, and the myriad health effects these cause. Adding fissible material to the mix would be a horrible thing to do to people, and you have the ability to stop it.

Through the upcoming siting regulations your department can ensure that micronuclear reactors are not placed on Indigenous lands without consent, do not occupy vital locations in our watersheds, and are not situated close to fault lines. This is not optimal, an outright ban would be far safer, but it is within the power of your organization to do.

Please do not put the interests of energy associations, politicians, and industry leaders before the people of our State. Do not make yourselves responsible for a rise in childhood cancer rates when the inevitable happens, and a poorly sited reactor leaks into the watertable. Do the right thing, and protect our environment and our children to the best of your department's ability.