

Nuclear Power – Deterring the Myths: Disinformation, Deregulation, and Data Centers

- **Moderated by: Linda Pentz Gunter, Founder and Executive Director, Beyond Nuclear**
- **Hosted by the Independent Council for Safe Energy Fund**



**Independent
Council for Safe
Energy Fund**

In memoriam of Dr. Joseph Romm

June 27, 1960 – September 14, 2026

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Joe will be dearly missed. Our sincere condolences to his daughter Antonia, his family, and friends.



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Georgia WAND (Women's Action for New Directions) Education Fund Inc.

KIM SCOTT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Burke County, Georgia

Waynesboro, GA in Burke County (formerly known as *Shell Bluff*) is surrounded by nuclear and waste production, industrial development, air and water pollution.



Plant Vogtle with 4 nuclear reactors is the largest nuclear plant in the U.S. & is the first new build in over 30 years



“Let them eat cake”



15 Years

36 Billion Dollars



Georgia Power built the most expensive power plant on Earth!
\$36 billion for 2.2 GWs

What could it have built instead?



Texas built 36 GWs of solar and battery storage in just four years for \$36 billion, the same cost as Vogtle - *Utility Dive '26*



WAGA
Morning Edition

NEXT UP: 8:51 AM

Local News

Plant Vogtle may be the most expensive energy plant in the world—and Georgians are paying for it

WLOGA | By [Alexia Ridley](#)

Published June 6, 2024 at 10:10 AM EDT



▶ LISTEN — 6:38



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Nuclear cost overrun could mean billions in extra Georgia Power profit



BUSINESS

By Matt Kempner, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

July 9, 2021

The more utility spends, the more it can earn; consumers pay price

The Augusta Chronicle

NEWS

Plant Vogtle nuclear projects hits another delay with 'construction quality' issues

Dave Williams Capitol Beat News Service

Published 5:30 a.m. ET Dec. 3, 2021

\$20+ Billion Over Budget

At \$36 billion, Plant Vogtle's units 3 & 4 were **more than \$20 billion** over budget (original estimate of \$14 billion)

7 Years of Delay

Lengthy construction delays (both reactors were promised to be online by 2017, but became **operational 7 years late**, in 2024) demonstrating that new nuclear cannot come online fast enough to meet urgent climate needs

More Coal and Gas

During the construction delay and after Vogtle 3 & 4 came online, the **gap was filled with gas and coal**, impacting already overburdened communities, along with excessive water use and loss.

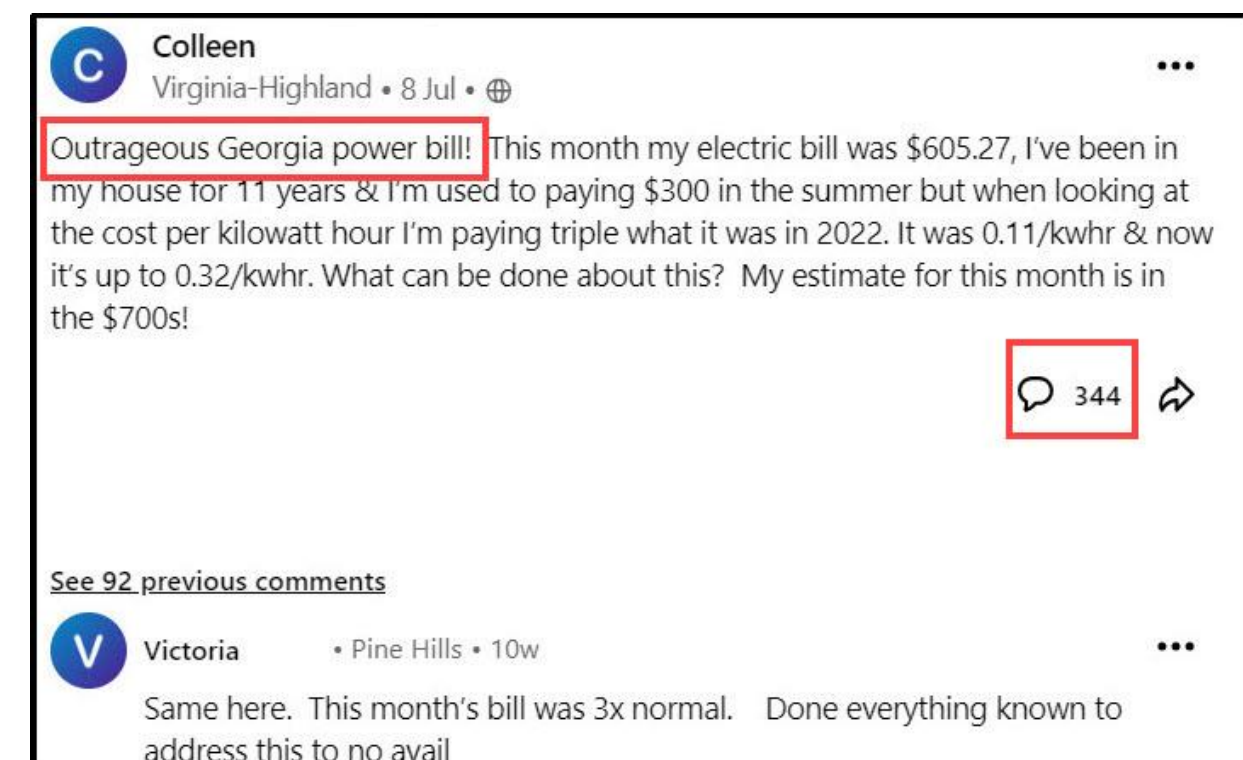
New Nuclear's Devastating Impact on Georgians

**25% rate increase to
residential ratepayers (so far)
from Plant Vogtle reactors 3 + 4**

275,000 residential disconnections in 2025

1 out of 9 households disconnected

13x the National average



Your State Wants To Be Next - Why?



New York Gov. Hochul wants to build 5GW worth of new nuclear



Illinois Gov. Pritzker wants 2GW of new nuclear



Michigan Gov. Whitmer wants new reactors on Lake Michigan

Duke Energy takes early steps toward a new nuclear plant in central North Carolina

WFAE | By Zachary Turner

Published January 6, 2026 at 3:34 PM EST

▶ LISTEN • 0:57



Duke Energy is exploring several options for new nuclear reactors at its Belews Creek s

OPINION: OPINION COLUMNS

Opinion: Even as Colorado legislators and governor move ahead, bringing nuclear power back to the state is wrong

The Georgia plant confirms nuclear energy is not worth the time and investment when we have proven power sources beyond coal



Portia Prescott and Kim Scott

1:30 AM MDT on May 29, 2025

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White House ballroom

USS Lincoln

Navy catapult system

Luigi Mangione

Jessica Bang dies

U.S. NEWS

New York governor seeks to build the state's first new nuclear power plant in decades



Finally, Some Accountability



2 out of 5 members
Replaced on the Georgia
Public Service Commission.

1 recently resigned.

Local News

Georgia Public Service Commissioner Tricia Pridemore not seeking reelection in 2026

By [Dan Raby](#)

February 18, 2026 / 11:37 AM EST / CBS Atlanta



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Two democrats unseat incumbent republicans in Georgia's Public Service Commission race by large margins

POLITICS

Alabama moves to end Public Service Commission elections after Democrats win in Georgia

Updated: Feb. 10, 2026, 9:00 p.m. | Published: Feb. 10, 2026, 6:21 a.m.



Georgia WAND Education Fund 501(c)(3)

Georgia Women's Action for New Directions 501(c)(4)

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KIM SCOTT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The nuclear power distraction

Environmental Grantmakers Association Fall Retreat panel
“Nuclear Power—Deterring the Myths: Disinformation, Deregulation,
and Data Centers,” Virginia Beach, Virginia, 28 September 2026

Amory B. Lovins

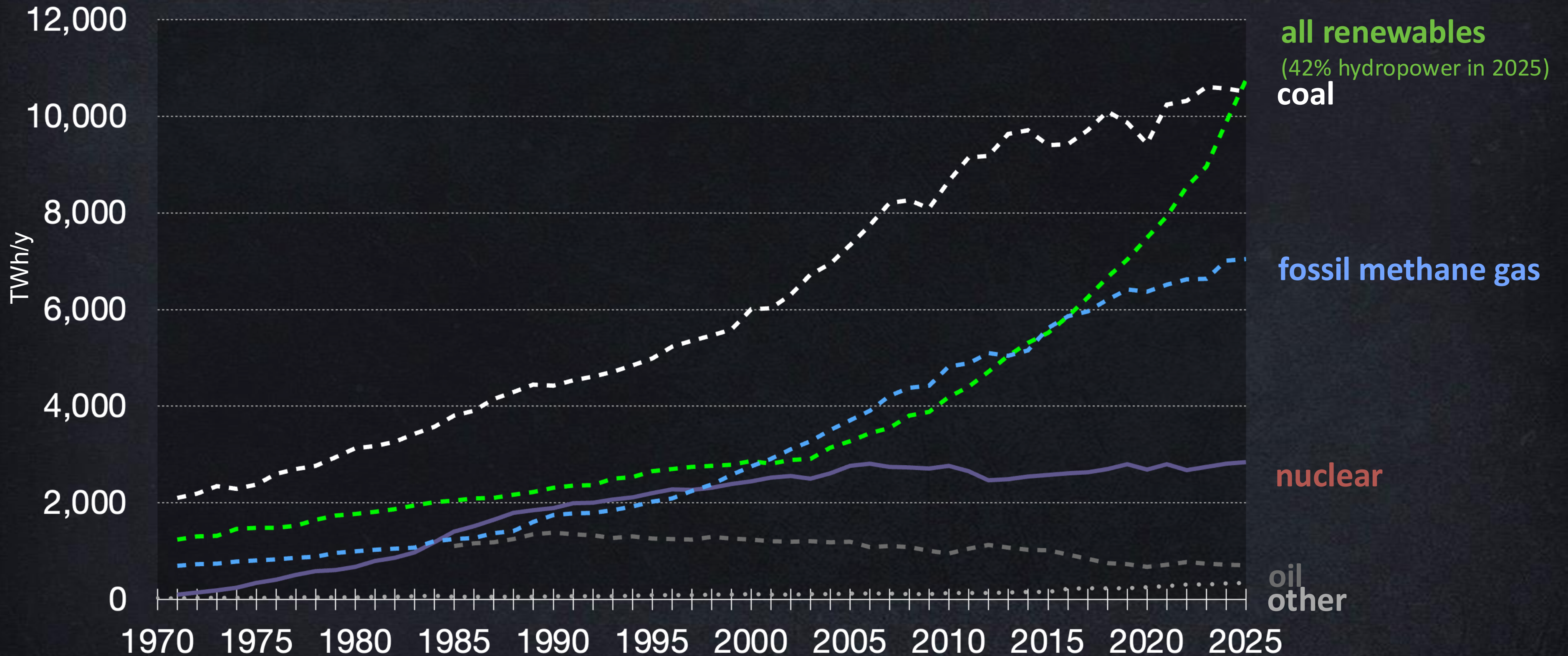
盧安武 博士 एमोरी लविन्स エイモリー B. ロビンズ Ловинс Эймори Блох
Adjunct Professor 2020–24, Lecturer 2025– in teaching terms, currently Adjunct
Lecturer, Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering, and Senior Precourt
Scholar of Integrative Design and Energy Efficiency, Precourt Institute for Energy,
Stanford University; Cofounder (1982) and Chairman Emeritus, RMI

ablovins@stanford.edu, efficiencyhub.stanford.edu

Nuclear power's five big problems *besides* uninsurable public risks like safety & waste

1. It has no business case, so it's shunned by private capital markets.

Worldwide electricity generation by source, 1971–2025



Curves are separate, not stacked. Updated 30 June 2026 from A B Lovins *et al.*, *El. Res. & Soc. Sci.* **38**:188–192 (2018), doi:10.1016/j.erss.2018.01.05. 1971–2022 data reconciled from BP/EI *Statistical Review of Energy* (2023 edition), All 2024–25 data from successor, Energy Institute, *Statistical Review of World Energy 2026*, 30 June 2026, <https://www.energyinst.org/statistical-review>. Distributed solar may be understated. IEA forecasts from *Annual Energy Outlook*, Dec 2025, Stated Policies and Net Zero Emissions, show 34% renewable. IEA in 2026 forecasted 2030 renewables at ~41% share; 2035, 50–76%; 2050, 69–89%. Global 2025 generation totaled ~32 PWh or 32,000 TWh.

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2. It has no operational need, but crowds out better and cheaper technologies.

This 100%-solar microgrid near Reno, Nevada, powers data centers more cheaply and reliably than grid power could

Courtesy of redwoodenergy.com (Sparks, Nevada)



“Renewable baseload” can power the toughest, heaviest industries

Horncastle Power Reserve images, www.aemba.gov.au



100 MW wind/batteries for BHP copper mines

Turner River solar farm, <https://www.fortescue.com/en/articles/fortescue-accelerates-real-zero-with-construction>



690 MW solar + 650 MWh batteries for Fortescue iron mining;
1.4 GW of Pilbara renewables by 2028

Boyne aluminum smelter, 8 TWh/y, <https://discoveryvalert.com.au/australias-industrial-energy-evolution-2026/>



2.8 GW solar/wind/batteries for Rio Tinto aluminum smelter
300 MW for >90%-solar Pueblo, CO steel mill



<https://bigpivots.com/no-4-a-solar-powered-steel-mill/>

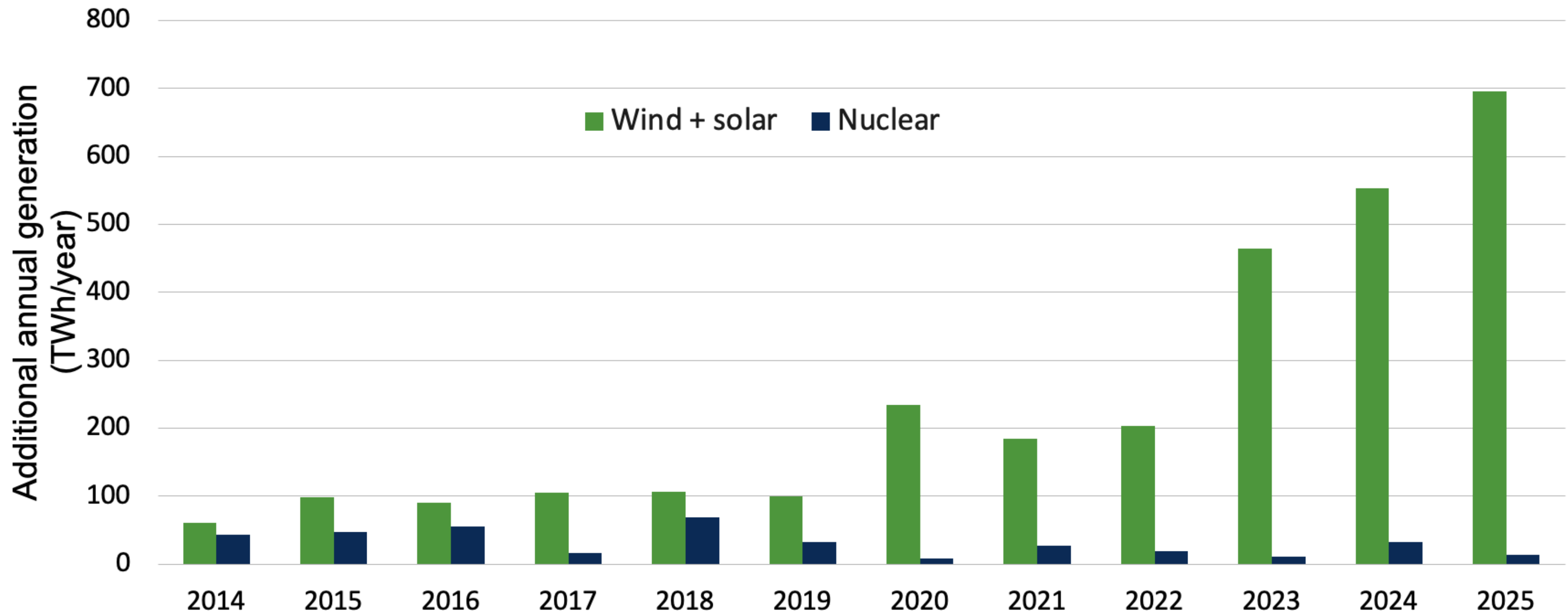
Nuclear power's five big problems *besides* uninsurable public risks like safety & waste

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3. It worsens climate change.

China: natural experiment in nuclear vs. renewable deployment

Additional annual generation from each year's new capacity added in China, 2014–2025

(assuming typical local capacity factors: nuclear 90%, wind 27%, solar 15%)



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4. It spreads nuclear weapons and harms national security.

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5. New reactor types can worsen some and solve none of those fatal flaws.
 - A. "Small Modular Reactors" are not a commercial product anywhere
 - B. Safety often uncertain, wastes and proliferation generally worse
 - C. Must become ~12 to 24× cheaper to beat renewables—no way
 - D. Far too late: very few SMRs are buildable before US grid is decarbonized
 - E. Small Modular *Renewables* are already hundreds of times faster
 - F. "Small Modular Reactors" can't compete even if the nuclear part is *free*
 - G. Using energy 5× more efficiently is even cheaper

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Why pay—let alone extra—for a risky non-solution?

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Costly, Slow, & Unscalable: New reactors worsen affordability but can't address AI data center surge

Joe Romm

Penn Center for Science, Sustainability, and the Media
rommj@sas.upenn.edu

“I have learned a lot of what
I know about energy economics
from Joe Romm.”

— Paul Krugman, *NY Times*, 2016

Hello. I'm Joe Romm



Joseph Romm

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Slides, additional resources and bios
available here:



Amory Lovins

Kimberly Scott

Linda Pentz Gunter

Dr. Joe Romm - pre-recorded on 8/31/2026

Tim Judson

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sara@safeenergycouncil.org



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