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Herbert throws support behind small, modular reactor plan

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Utah Gov. Gary Herbert last week endorsed an Oregon company's bid to build small, modular nuclear reactors under a new U.S. Energy Department program.

Herbert urged Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz to support an application by NuScale Power LLC to receive federal funding.

NuScale is part of the Western Initiative for Nuclear that Herbert, five other governors and the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems signed onto in June. Herbert wrote to Moniz in his July 30 letter the program "provides an important pathway to test the technical and economic viability of a clean and promising nuclear technology."

He noted his work developing 10-year energy plans for the state and for the Western Governors Association, which he led until June, saying both plans envision an important future for small-scale nuclear power.

One of the specific goals of the Western Governors' plan is to "find ways to accelerate the introduction of small modular reactors to the marketplace," he wrote to Moniz.

The energy department has a five-year, \$452 million program to promote accelerated deployment of the small modular reactor.

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