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State Representative Harry Benton

Benton Urges Signing of Bill to Create Jobs, Expand Cutting Edge Energy Production

PLAINFIELD, Ill. — Following the passage of a bipartisan bill to create jobs and expand Illinois’ clean energy production by paving the way for small, modern nuclear projects, state Rep. Harry Benton, D-Plainfield, is advocating for the bill to become law.

“This is an opportunity to put Illinois on the cutting edge of modern energy production, create jobs, and cut utility costs for families,” Benton said. “Illinois families are struggling with the cost of energy and the legacy power companies are trying to hike rates—again. Replacing expensive, dirty and non-renewable last-generation fuels, which are also scheduled to phase out, with solutions like small modular nuclear plants is crucial if we’re going to do something about this problem.”

Benton was among the chief sponsors of House Bill 2473 which enables the state to regulate and authorize modern nuclear energy production projects, including modular reactors. These cutting edge reactors can be small enough to fit on a truck, but can power high-use sites such as manufacturing plants and other industries. Illinois has prohibited all reactor construction for the past 36 years, despite advances in safety and efficiency.

The bill was approved by the General Assembly as of Nov. 9 with bipartisan majorities in both houses, and is now being considered by Gov. J.B. Pritzker.

“What this bill means for Illinois is job creation, energy independence, power bills going down and energy costs stabilizing,” Benton said. “It’s time to move Illinois forward.”

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