

Get news, sports and politics alerts

SIGN UP

[Click here to manage your alerts](#)

Utah Senate spikes hot-button nuclear power bill

Utility bills » The proposal would use a rate hike to help fund Blue Castle plant.

By Judy Fahys | The Salt Lake Tribune

First Published Mar 01 2013 06:21 pm • Last Updated Mar 01 2013 11:03 pm

Senators killed a controversial bill Friday to give a boost, with help from electric ratepayers, to Utah's first proposed nuclear power plant.

Sponsoring Sen. Curt Bramble told colleagues he was asking to bury [SB199](#) because it wasn't needed, and he pointed to a letter from the [Public Service Commission](#) saying its current regulations already account for nuclear power. But, by singling out the bill and guaranteeing it won't rise again before the session ends March 14, the Provo Republican also signaled strong feelings behind the scenes for a measure proposed by advocates for the proposed [Blue Castle nuclear plant](#).

"It appears that what was originally requested" by the proponents, said Bramble in an interview, "was not what was reflected in the draft of the bill" submitted to the Legislature's attorneys.

The measure was to have allowed the Utah [Public Service Commission](#) to free a utility like Rocky Mountain Power to charge ratepayers for higher-cost energy — like nuclear power — instead of cheaper options. It also would have allowed the utility to pass on project costs to ratepayers before delivering power.

Blue Castle President and CEO Aaron Tilton said [SB199](#) treated his multibillion-dollar, 3,000-megawatt nuclear plant just like any other renewable energy project. He said he welcomed the Senate vote.

"We were trying to get clarity on the process," said the former legislator. "That [PSC letter] clarifies it for us."

Consumer advocates including Utah AARP and the state's consumer office had worried important ratepayer protections were being sacrificed.

The [Healthy Environment Alliance of Utah](#), which is suing to block the nuclear plant, applauded Bramble's move.

"Utah customers don't want to be on the hook for a costly

Popular Stories

1. Ann Romney: It feels like the end of a Mormon church...
2. Weekend Express: Utah's events planning guide
3. Roma Downey felt 'inspired' to bring 'The Bible' to ...
4. Bonnie Franklin, 'One Day At a Time' star, dead at 6...
5. New Mormon scriptures tweak race, polygamy reference...

[Click here to view more](#)

Staying Connected

03/01/2013 FRI 10:25 FAX



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

ORIN HELL
Deputy Governor

Public Service Commission

RON ALLER
Chairman

DAVID R. CLARK
Commissioner

THAD LEVAR
Commissioner

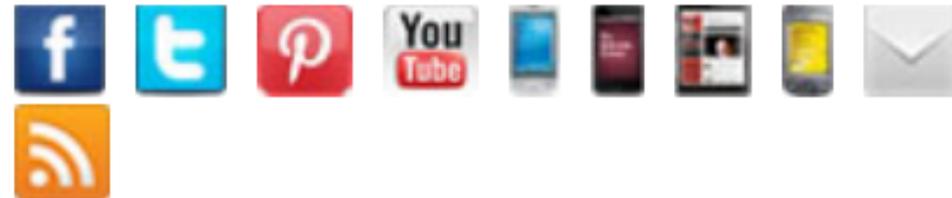
February 21, 2013

and risky nuclear power plant," said Executive Director Christopher Thomas. "Blue Castle made a desperate attempt to force us to pay for their nuclear gamble, but state leaders saw through it."

fahys@sltrib.com

Twitter: [@judyfahys](https://twitter.com/@judyfahys)

-
- [Dov](#)



SLCDailyDeal.com

The Salt Lake Tribune