



Washington State Legislature

February 6, 2023

Washington State Environmental Justice Council
111 Israel Rd SE
Tumwater, WA 98501

Dear Washington State Environmental Justice Council (EJC),

Thank you for the good work being done by EJC to incorporate, provide, promote, and support environmental justice in Washington state.

We would like to draw your attention to the current plan by Washington state to utilize over 600,000 acres of land in eastern Washington to site renewable energy projects – both public and private. Such energy projects with the scope, proportion, and sprawl of the [Horse Heaven Wind Project](#) in the Tri-Cities must be seen through an equity lens with questions such as:

- Who will benefit from this project? Middle/upper class white communities outside the Tri-Cities and corporations located outside the U.S.
- Who will bear the visual and land-loss burden? Tri-Citians, with an MSA population that is 41% BIPOC. Tri-Citians feel harmed by this proposed development and should qualify as an overburdened community and vulnerable population — the sort of population that the HEAL Act was supposed to assist to avoid the negative impacts of siting unwanted industrial pollution. The citizens of this area view this massive wind development as industrial land pollution, yet it feels like the environmental justice community is not listening to their pleas to stop the project.
- Does this perpetuate the pattern of underrepresented communities bearing the burden of energy siting while receiving none of the benefit? The Tri-Cities MSA is already served by an electricity fuel mix that is 92-95% non-emitting energy, so these massive wind farm developments do nothing to clean the air or grid for the residents who endure the siting impact
- Would you agree that “fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, rules, and policies” is at stake here when it comes to the approval of the Horse Heaven Wind Farm? Would you please consider the issue and make a recommendation to EFSEC and the governor to pause regulatory decision-making on approval of the project long enough to ensure that the environmental justice has been adequately addressed?

We urge the EJC to consider these questions and to provide recommendations and guidance to the state regarding the Horse Heaven Wind Project (and other large footprint energy projects) that disproportionately impact overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

Sincerely,

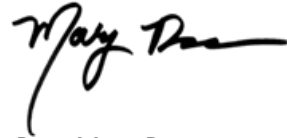
Rep. Stephanie Barnard
Washington State Representative
8th Legislative District



Sen. Matt Boehnke
Washington State Senator
8th Legislative District



Rep. April Connors
Washington State Representative
8th Legislative District



Rep. Mary Dye
Washington State Representative
9th Legislative District



Rep. Joe Schmick
Washington State Representative
9th Legislative District



Sen. Curtis King
Washington State Senator
14th Legislative District



Rep. Chris Corry
Washington State Representative
14th Legislative District



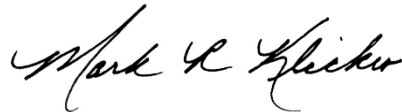
Sen. Nikki Torres
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15th Legislative District



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15th Legislative District



Sen. Perry Dozier
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16th Legislative District



Rep. Mark Klicker
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16th Legislative District