

2022 September 17 WSDCC Meeting

1003 - PASSED – 091722 – ENV – CLIMATE COMMITMENT ACT (CCA) FUNDS MUST BE MANAGED WITH ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

WHEREAS the 2021 Climate Commitment Act (CCA) defines “Climate Commitment” as “the process and mechanisms to ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to advancing climate resilience and environmental justice and achieving an equitable and inclusive transition to a carbon neutral economy”; and

WHEREAS there are no metrics, criteria or risk assessments for the legislature to use when earmarking and appropriating CCA funds, thus no ability to ensure to Washingtonians that CCA funds are earmarked and appropriated in a coordinated and strategic way, to meet the letter and spirit of the CCA; and

WHEREAS a coordinated and strategic approach can come from agreed-upon metrics and criteria, developed in conjunction with the Environmental Justice Council, for example, how much greenhouse gas reduction will result per dollar invested in a particular project; other examples could be the number of people trained for new clean energy jobs per dollar invested; how many more people are reached by transit services per dollar invested; and other criteria; and

WHEREAS, a risk assessment for each appropriation can be included which evaluates the chances of the project’s success and risk of failure such as not meeting Washington’s greenhouse gas reduction timeline and or reduction in environmental impacts to overburdened communities; the risk assessment would guard against money being appropriated to projects which are not within the spirit and letter of the law; and

WHEREAS the criteria, metrics and risk assessment should be supported by the best available data as referenced in legislation such as Limiting Greenhouse Gas Emissions RCW 70A.45 and the HEAL Act, RCW 70A.02 including the climate impacts group at the University of Washington, the Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map and the Washington State greenhouse gas inventory from the Department of Ecology to assure that investments are directed towards projects that have a high degree of certainty in addressing environmental disparities and greenhouse gas reduction within the climate crisis timeline.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington State Democratic Central Committee calls upon the Washington State Legislature to direct appropriate State of Washington (Dept. of Commerce, Health and or Ecology, for example) to establish a set of criteria, metrics and risk assessment, to ensure that Climate Commitment Act (CCA) funds are invested with transparency and accountability towards a coordinated and strategic approach to addressing the 2050 statewide emissions limits established in RCW 70A.45.020(1)(a)(iv) and the climate crisis and achieving environmental equity; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that starting with the 2023 legislative session, the WSDCC calls upon the legislature to use metrics and risk assessment to ensure that budget allocations and appropriation of CCA funds are being spent in a coordinated and strategic way to meet the goals of the CCA; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution be distributed to all Democratic Washington State Legislators, Governor Inslee, the WA State Secretary of Transportation, Directors of the Washington State Departments of Commerce, Ecology, and Health, and the WSDCC Advocacy Committee for appropriate action.