

YRCAA Support for Funding under the WA Climate Commitment Act

Under the WA Climate Commitment Act there are millions of dollars available to address air pollution in overburdened and underserved communities. Three of Washington's sixteen overburdened communities are in Yakima County. 40% of funding under the CCA is designated for overburdened and underserved communities.

WA Ecology has conducted multiple work sessions and webinars to inform the public about CCA processes and opportunities for overburdened and underserved communities. The YRCAA has never participated. In fact, the YRCAA states (correctly) that the agency is under no obligation to comply with the CCA or the HEAL Act.

But Ecology is required to consult with local clean air agencies on rules that will implement the Climate Commitment Act in overburdened communities. Ecology is currently doing this by writing WAC 173-448. There is an opportunity here to engage with Ecology and access funds for Yakima. So far, the YRCAA has not participated.

The YRCAA demonstrates complete disinterest in the health of people who live in Yakima County. When citizens talk about the impact of dairy air pollution on asthmatic children the YRCAA Board ignores their concerns. When citizens present research on the impact of air pollution on cardiac health and longevity the YRCAA Board ignores their concerns. When citizens talk about the impact of air pollution from limited purpose landfills on their health, including increased incidence of cancer, the YRCAA Board ignores their concerns.

Regulation 1 for the YRCAA describes agency policy:

PUBLIC POLICY. Securing and maintaining levels of air quality that will:

1. Protect human health and safety
2. Prevent injury to plant and animal life and property
3. Foster comfort and convenience
4. Promote economic and social development
5. Facilitate the enjoyment of natural attractions
6. Prevent or minimize the transfer of air pollution to other resources
7. Ensure equity and consistency with the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) and WCAA
8. Educate and inform the citizens of Yakima County on air quality matters
9. Maintain accurate and current policies, regulations, and rules
10. Perform administrative actions in a timely and effective manner; and
11. Cooperate with the local governments, the Yakama Nation, organizations or citizens on air quality matters.

In fact, the YRCAA only promotes economic development related to certain favored industries, while ignoring the other objectives.