



2021 Legislative Agenda

Each year, Environment Washington sets out goals for the legislative session and beyond. In addition to helping us measure our progress, the legislative agenda lets decision-makers know which high-priority environmental items our members want us to tackle.

Wildlife over Waste

For decades, people have been dumping millions of tons of plastic and other trash into the Pacific. Today, there's so much plastic swirling around that the ocean's currents have formed a toxic soup of plastic trash in an area called the Pacific Garbage Patch. It's creating an environmental disaster for ocean wildlife: plastic and other marine debris kills millions of sea turtles, sea birds and marine mammals every year who mistake it for food. Nothing we use for a few minutes should pollute the environment and harm wildlife for hundreds of years. That's why Environment Washington supports:

- **Banning polystyrene takeout containers and cups statewide.** One of the most egregious single-use plastics is polystyrene, more commonly known as Styrofoam. We support a proposed bill that would ban polystyrene takeout containers and cups across the state.
- **Making producers responsible for waste.** Producer responsibility is an important step toward a circular economy, reducing waste and preventing litter. We support policies that incentivize producers to reduce their use of packaging and build products that are less hazardous, built to last, and are easy to recycle or reuse by requiring that producers are responsible for all waste costs associated with their products, including waste collection, transportation and management, and litter clean-up costs.

Destination: Zero Carbon

Transportation is the number one source of our state and country's carbon pollution, as well as contributing to air and water pollution which has significant health impacts. To slow global warming and reduce this pollution, we need to change how Washingtonians get around. Environment Washington supports:

- **Electrifying cars.** We're calling for all new cars and trucks sold in the state to be electric by 2030. We support legislation to facilitate the shift to a cleaner, electric car future.
- **Establishing a clean fuel standard.** Washingtonians need more options for cleaner fuels to improve public health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The policy requires oil refineries and importers to reduce the carbon intensity of their fuels, increasing the use of clean fuels and electricity to power our transportation system. Already functioning in California, Oregon, and British Columbia, a clean fuel standard has proven to be an effective means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution from the transportation sector.
- **Driving less, living more.** We need to reduce the need to drive by making it easier, cheaper and more enjoyable to travel on foot, bike or public transit and investing in multi-modal transportation.

Get the Lead Out

Lead is a potent neurotoxin and it affects how our children learn, grow and behave. Our children's drinking water is at risk wherever we have faucets, fountains, or plumbing made with lead. We support legislation that would be an important step to ensure safe drinking water in schools by:

- **Testing water fully and properly**, and public access to all data and remediation steps.
- **Requiring mitigation** at every tap that tests at 5 part per billion, and alerting parents of lead levels at drinking water taps that test above 1 ppb, the action level recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Approving OSPI's \$3 million capital budget request for the Healthy Kids-Healthy Schools grant program for lead fixture replacement/remediation costs to invest in our kid's health and fund the replacement of lead-bearing fountains, faucets, and other sources of contamination.

Right to Repair

Companies use their power in the marketplace to make things harder to repair. Some companies design products to be impossible to repair — such as gluing the battery in a smartphone so it cannot be replaced — or making repair proprietary so that only the manufacturing company can do the repairs. Most companies won't make the tools, schematics or replacement parts available for sale, so even if repairs can be done by the user or an independent repair business, it's more challenging and done with suboptimal products.

We support giving Washingtonians the Right to Repair by requiring manufacturing companies to make the diagnostic tools, schematics, replacement parts and tools available to the user or a third party available at a fair price.

Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency

Reaching Washington's commitment to 100% clean energy by 2045 requires taking serious action. That's why Environment Washington supports:

- **Community Solar.** Solar energy is a clean, affordable way for households and communities to meet their energy needs, and community solar programs allow for communities to collectively invest in solar projects to reduce their energy bills and get their electricity from a clean, renewable source. Environment Washington supports bills to expand the scope of and access to community solar projects in Washington.
- **The Healthy Homes & Clean Buildings bill.** Meeting our state's climate goals will involve rapidly changing how we heat and power our homes and buildings, moving away from on-site fossil fuel combustion and towards efficient, electrified heating and cooling systems. Environment Washington supports bills to limit the expansion of climate-warming natural gas heat systems and setting aggressive energy savings targets for Washington buildings.

Save the Orcas

Just 74 Southern Resident orcas remain today. The population was listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act in 2005; its population since then has further declined. Despite two successful births in 2020, the population continues to struggle with reduced quantity and quality of their main food source like salmon, pollutants that could cause immune or reproductive dysfunction, and excess vessel noise which can interfere with their hunting.

Environment Washington supports removal of dams like the lower four Snake River dams to promote salmon restoration, as well as other recommendations of the Orca Recovery Task Force to reduce vessel noise and eliminate contaminants in the Salish region.

Environment Washington's Mission

Washington's natural wonders, from the basalt cliffs along the Columbia River, to the wondrous wildlife of the Salish Sea and the alpine peaks of the Olympic Mountains enrich our lives in countless ways. At Environment Washington, we know it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to protect these special places and win concrete results for clean air and clean water. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.