

Lila Rhodes

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft plan for Washington's use of the VW mitigation funds. As written, the plan may achieve two critically important goals:

- 1) Achieve healthy air in communities that have historically borne a disproportionate share of air pollution
- 2) Accelerate the deployment of all-electric engines

During the implementation of the plan, I strongly urge you to maintain close consultation with environmental justice and public health stakeholders in order to achieve these goals. Communities of color and low-income households may face significant social and economic barriers to accessing clean air. Your continued effective engagement will ensure that selected projects are responsive to community needs and deliver the greatest health benefits. Furthermore, as you explore funding projects that qualify for matching funds, I ask that you keep in consideration those communities that may not be able to offer a match but still have an acute need for air quality improvements.

The needy cannot afford to filter household air much less take vacations in places with truly fresh air.

Utilized effectively, the VW settlement funds offer an opportunity for Washington to accelerate the growth of a modern, zero-emissions transportation system. I appreciate that you have chosen to prioritize funding all-electric engines and target public transit fleets first. In order to make these purchases more cost-effective, I urge you to include Governor Inslee's Executive Order 14-04 in the plan, which requires state agencies to include the cost of carbon emissions in cost-benefit analyses for public fleet purchases.

"It's a matter of life and breath."