Den Wichar

Dear Ms. Erin Torrone,Climate Commitment Act's directive to improve air quality in overburdened communities is critical to ensuring that the law functions as intended to reduce environmental health disparities. I appreciate Ecology's ongoing commitment to incorporating public input and developing comprehensive framework. Identifying specific communities is necessary to ensure focused and strategic allocation of resources. However, the proposed process narrows eligibility in ways that may unintentionally and arbitrarily screen out vulnerable communities. Application of indicators in the proposed process also treats some similarly impacted communities very differently. I urge Ecology to refine both approach and process to ensure equitable treatment of overburdened communities highly impacted by air pollution, specifically: APPROACH- Better document how and why specific indicators are being applied. At this time, the process appears too complex, and application of proposed indicators narrows eligibility of communities in ways that may be inequitable and somewhat arbitrary. - Go beyond binary approach to identifying communities that are either "overburdened" or not and better reflect the gradation of pollution impact on communities. To do this, Ecology should explore tiered approach to account for built-in uncertainties and margins of error, in order to ensure that similarly impacted communities are treated equitably.- Incorporate adaptive management approach into the final process, including plan to evaluate outcomes, review communities, and revise the process at regular intervals.PROCESS- Community Indicators:1. Explicitly incorporate Ecology's existing obligation to proactively and meaningfully engage and consult with federally recognized tribes, with sufficient time and information made available.2. Environmental Health Disparities (EHD) Map and EJScreen Demographic Index: Consider using lower rank on EHD Map and lower percentile on EJScreen Demographic Index as thresholds for these indicators, in order to account for built-in uncertainties in each tool and avoid unintentionally screening out communities that may be experiencing similar levels of vulnerability and exposure to pollution. - Air Pollution Indicators:1. Ecology should include corrective step for 'Elevated Level of Criteria Air Pollution' indicator that accounts for margins of error and gaps in existing monitoring and modeling data. For example, communities just below PM2.5 threshold may experience similar levels of criteria air pollution as communities just over the threshold, but be treated very differently under the proposed process. Examples of places just below this threshold include Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation lands, Spokane Tribe lands, and neighborhoods in Lacey, Olympia and Vancouver.2. Proposed application of indicators appears to undervalue several source categories of criteria air pollution. Ecology should adjust application of the following indicators, including adding indicators, so that overburdened communities highly impacted by air pollution are not left behind:2.a. Proximity to Stationary Sources: Proposed process leaves out some communities heavily impacted by stationary sources of criteria pollutants. There are places in the 99th percentile for this category that get screened out of the draft screening map, even though they also meet proposed Community Indicator thresholds. Examples include Lummi Nation lands, Swinomish Tribe lands, Samish Nation lands, the Cherry Point Industrial District region, and Longview-Kelso area. It appears that communities in these areas are being screened out because they don't meet 'Elevated Level of Criteria Pollution" indicator. However, threshold value for this indicator is measure of exposure to criteria pollutants. Communities who meet this threshold should not be screened out, or have to meet multiple criteria pollutant thresholds. 2.b. Wildfire Smoke Exposure: Tribal lands and communities highly impacted by wildfire smoke are largely left out under proposed process. There are places at or above 95th percentile for this category that get screened out of draft screening map, even though they also meet

proposed Community Indicator thresholds. Examples include city of Wenatchee, parts of Chelan region, Spokane Tribe lands, Kalispel Tribe lands, and Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation lands. Similar to 'Proximity to Stationary Sources' indicator, threshold value for this indicator is measure of exposure to PM2.5, criteria pollutant. Communities who meet this threshold should not be screened out, or have to meet multiple criteria pollutant thresholds. 2.c. Vehicle Pollution: Vehicles are the largest source of criteria air pollution in Washington, but proposed process may undervalue pollution from busy roadways and transportation hubs. Communities highly impacted by vehicle pollution - who also meet the Community Indicator and Elevated Level of Criteria Pollution thresholds - may get screened out by proposed process flow.Communities highly impacted by vehicle pollution are likely included via use of Environmental Health Disparities Map and/or the 'Elevated Level of Criteria Air Pollution' indicator. However, these communities may be removed from consideration if they don't meet threshold for an indicator in second tier of Air Pollution Indicators.Because there are no discrete indicators for vehicle pollution in the proposed process, it is difficult to know if any communities are being screened out for this reason. However, traffic-impacted communities who meet thresholds for a Community Indicator and the 'Elevated Level of Criteria Pollution' indicator should not be at risk of being screened out. For this reason, Ecology should add one or more specific indicators for vehicle pollution.Thank you!Regards, Den Wichar 711 W 25th StVancouver, WA 98660