

Zero Waste Washington

Yes, good morning. I'm Heather Trim, H-E-A-T-H-E-R T-R-I-M, Executive Director of Zero Waste Washington. We're a statewide nonprofit, and our goal is to make trash obsolete, which means a lot less material going to the landfill. In fact, we are very supportive right now of HB 1799 that was passed by the state legislature and signed by the governor in 2022, and are working with many stakeholders on a large organics bill for 2024 to make sure that we don't keep creating more and more methane gas at the landfills because we are continuing to send organic material to them. Specific to this rulemaking, we will be submitting technical formal comments with a lot of detail, and I just want to highlight some of the highlights that, in fact, some of the other speakers have already spoken to. We are now at the point in this time, and as we are certainly having more and more impacts in terms of climate change, we need to be using the latest technology. One problem with the current rule is that it does not facilitate using drones to collect the methane gas by the owner and operators of the landfills, but also by third parties and have that be part of what Ecology considers in terms of regulating the landfills in terms of the methane gas. We should not be relying on people walking on a grid that's 25 feet and ultimately 100 feet wide that we're figuring out if there's methane leaking. There's no question that we need to be using the newest technology and as soon as possible. We'd like to see, A, that required in the rule or at least a very strong process to make that happen. The other thing is that, as was also mentioned, the food waste starts decaying and making methane gas immediately and a large part of that methane that's generated is done in the first three years, and yet the rule waits until five years before there is a requirement to expand the methane gas collection into those areas. That just does not make sense, and we would very much like to see that time frame shortened dramatically. We'll be putting that in our comment letter as well. Thank you so much. Washington's a leader on climate change with our governor and our legislature and our people, and we really would like to see a very, very strong rule coming out of this that goes well beyond all the federal stuff. Thanks so much.