

## Anonymous Anonymous

There is no good reason to approve this application when considering its impacts on community health and overall pollution, especially the way this impacts some of our most vulnerable communities in a gross expression of ecological racism and classism. That's not even to mention the ways in which new diesel infrastructure undermines Washington's Climate Commitment Act and the state's legally binding obligation to reduce fossil-fuel dependence across all sectors. Each new diesel generator locks in years of pollution and carbon emissions at a time when cleaner alternatives are available and necessary. Is the Department of Ecology truly not beholden to the Climate Commitment Act? Is Ecology truly more devoted to the profit of the very few who would benefit from this new diesel infrastructure than they are to protecting our environment and the communities that call this place home?

Claims about the negative impact of diesel on people and environment aren't speculative, they are grounded in science. Even if the federal government has become a fully anti-science machine, I expect better of Washington State and its departments. It is known that diesel backup generators produce significant local air pollution, including fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), and toxic diesel exhaust, all of which are linked to asthma, heart disease, and cancer. Quincy already faces disproportionately high air-pollution burdens and ranks in the 92nd percentile nationally for PM<sub>2.5</sub> exposure. Why exactly would Ecology want to make this worse? Diesel exhaust is a regulated toxic pollutant linked to cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, and cancer, and as such additional uncontrolled diesel generators should under no circumstances be permitted. The potential impact of these extra generators on largely rural community raises serious environmental-justice concerns and contradicts Ecology's duty to protect public health, and raises serious questions about the Department of Ecology's stated intent to approve the application, presumably regardless of what feedback is received during public comment. Are these extra diesel generators really worth sidelining democratic processes by making a decision before public comment has even heard?

Furthermore, because this kind of permitting is often done piecemeal, the cumulative impact on communities like Quincy is often hidden. Quincy is experiencing the cumulative impacts of many data-center expansions, yet each diesel generator permit is evaluated in isolation. This approach hides the true burden on community health, air quality, and long-term sustainability -- to what end? Why go about this in a way which seemingly knowingly underestimates the long term impact of these generators? Who exactly benefits? Who profits? Ecology must evaluate projects based on their full lifecycle and cumulative environmental impacts, including routine generator testing, startup and shutdown emissions, and the growing concentration of diesel infrastructure in Quincy.

Communities hosting data centers are frequently rural, agricultural, or communities of color, raising serious environmental-justice concerns when diesel pollution is concentrated there. Cleaner alternatives exist, including battery energy storage systems and renewable-based backup power, but regulators often fail to require them. Approving this application would be a betrayal of these communities and a gross demonstration of environmental racism and classism. Ecology must NOT approve this application, despite its undemocratic stated intent.