

Todd Johnson

Hello. As someone who has worked for 21 years in the waste industry and the bulk of that in the State of Washington, I urge the DOE and legislators in this state to reconsider adding or changing the litter tax to include construction materials. Due to failed democrat leadership in the statehouse and governor's mansion, this state had a large budget deficit which then prompted them to look for more ways to tax the People. When you add a litter tax on construction materials, contractors add that cost to the overall construction cost of a project which creates a situation where construction projects are way more expensive than they should be. That in turn gets pushed down onto future tenants or if the project is way too expensive due to the construction material costs, the project gets shelved. We have a real dire housing crisis in WA, especially the Seattle area, where there are not enough affordable homes. The State or City of Seattle enacts policies with extra costs, taxes, or regulation and then blames developers that there are no affordable housing getting built. You need to make projects more cheap to build which then create jobs, more affordable homes, and growth in the area. Instead, the tax-and-spend mentality is killing this state and growth. You put this policy in to combat litter but it's a trojan horse to find new ways to tax people. If you truly want to stop construction materials or tires from getting littered, impose higher fines on people you catch littering or clear out more homeless encampments where this material is everywhere. The State is an enabler of the homeless situation which has litter as a consequence. Between half-baked ideas like this litter tax add-on, extended producer responsibility on packaging that those companies were already recycling, or reparations for people, it's a wonder that all of our businesses and tax payers haven't left yet. We can use some of the littered construction materials to light our dumpster fires in the future.