

Annemarie Dooley MD

My name is Anne-Marie Julie, and I'm a kidney doctor and a member of Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility. I'm speaking tonight because we face multiple crises. The first in March, when I treated COVID patients, many of whom died. Then in the last week, as I prescribed inhalers to patients unable to breathe from wildfire smoke, a deadly disease followed by life-threatening wildfire smoke; both a direct result of our climate crisis.

Yet, inexplicably, I'm having to explain why it's not a good idea to build a greenhouse gas-producing methanol refinery on the banks of the Columbia where I stood last summer with the local community in Kalama. This Refinery will be fed by fracked gas that is toxic from source to delivery. I assume no one listening has seen the effects of methanol exposure on people. I have. It includes blindness, vomiting, and unless I clean the blood of the dialysis machine, death. But somehow we're to believe that carbon-intense methanol refining here is clean because it reduces coal burning in China. It sounds like the same flimflammy that came from Volkswagen when they promoted low-emission diesel engines; it was all an illusion.

To be blunt, the corporation and the paid experts behind this methanol refinery are part of a system of indifference that does not care if refining methanol imposes a cost of methane leaks and air pollution on state residents. Cost including chronic ill health, increased medication use and days lost from work; costs that are never counted because they fall on small and lower-income communities; costs that far outweigh the benefits offered by a small offering of local jobs.

I'm asking the Department of Ecology not to allow this refinery. A facility that would increase greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to a future of Northwest skies; yellow with smoke. The Shoreline Permit for this project should be denied. Thank you.