

Markus Boos

Thank you. My name is Markus Boos. I'm a pediatrician and a scientist in King County. Simply put, I cannot speak strongly enough against the building of this refinery and I implore Washington State to deny the permit for its construction. Based on the department's analyses, this project would produce millions of tons of carbon pollution yearly, and not only does this run contrary to our state's climate goals, but the facility will also pollute water systems including the Columbia River, while devastating the surrounding ecosystems.

As a physician, I'd like to address the health effects that would result from construction of this refinery. What the environmental impact statement does not directly address are the indirect costs it will occur secondary to the refineries adverse effects on human health locally. In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a detailed report summarizing the devastating effects of human-driven climate change secondary to the combustion of fossil fuels, and the release of greenhouse gases. These consequences include economic and health impacts in natural disasters, sea-level rise, and the effects of extreme heat on changing ecosystems that won't be able to support human life. To mitigate these impacts, the IPCC demands that we reach and sustain net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. Fundamentally the permitting and building of this refinery runs contrary to that goal and no amounts of greenwashed messaging about, "Carbon emissions savings" associated with this project can contradict that.

We are experiencing health effects of unabated greenhouse gas release today, and that will worsen only with time. That's from heatstroke, floods, wildfires, heat-sensitive infections are occurring in our backyards and worldwide. As a pediatrician, I recognize the local longitudinal health effects of pollution and climate change secondary to greenhouse gas emissions from refineries such as the one in question, which include a greater incidence and severity of atopic dermatitis, asthma, other respiratory illnesses, which are compounded by the wildfires we are experiencing.

I also witnessed firsthand the detrimental health effects and mental health effects as well. We know that all the consequences disproportionately affect children, and these enormous costs will ultimately fall on our woefully unprepared healthcare system and must be considered in any impact assessment. I reject the permit for this.