

Charles Anderson

COMMENTS ON WA CLEAN FUEL STANDARD
Proposed Department OF Ecology Revisions:
7/31/25

Adam Saul
Washington State Department of Ecology
Climate Pollution Reduction Program

Dear Mr. Saul,

1. My focus is on the Biogas provisions of this act, which in general rewards huge dairies and works to encourage consolidation in the IAAG sector, which has severe associated consequences for violations of our Clean Air Act our Clean Water Act and the social justice violations of many of our most vulnerable communities where those consolidated operations are located.
2. While it seems safe to follow in California's steps that experiment has demonstrated clear and disastrous secondary consequences.
3. The Act and its proposed revisions are clearly an attempt to encourage the production of manure (dairy) sourced biogas with the unintended consequence of financially supporting one of the most polluting industries in our state.
4. While on the surface it sounds wonderful that we can, with "methane digesters" turn a problem (the huge production of manure by large CAFOs) which would otherwise be spread on fields and leach into our ground water and streams, into a "renewable energy source" the premise is based on smoke and mirrors. A careful analysis shows that this approach actual makes the problem far worse.
5. First of all the industry likes to call them methane digesters, as if these operations get rid of methane which is one of the worst GHG, far exceeding CO2. The digesters actually produce methane and do not remove it.
6. Secondly BIOGAS plants produce a huge amount of CO2 along with the methane and the disposition of that CO2 remains unregulated. Likely a large portion is just released into the atmosphere, completely negating the entire purpose of the clean fuels act. The industry does suggest the CO2 is "refined to 99% purity and sold to beverage companies". If consumers knew that their favorite beverage was infused with bubbles sourced as a byproduct of manure digestion. Although "purified", what about that other 1%?

It is no wonder that 3 of the largest fossil fuel companies in the world have each spent over 2 Billion dollars in the last year, purchasing Biogas infrastructure companies and are actively working to convince Washington farmers to consolidate to be able to afford the biogas infrastructure.

Why? Because they know that fossil fuels are under attack worldwide, led by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and that energy source diversification makes good business sense. But, with Biogas and the proposed WA Clean Fuels Act, they get paid for that diversification.

It doesn't take much thought to understand that with "free carbon credits", tradeable out of state, they can mitigate their fossil fuel activities and this act becomes a fossil fuel corporate gold mine.

I also worry about our state food security. It will not be long before the very large fossil fuel companies become shareholders in our largest farms. Tax incentives can have huge unintended consequences and we should not give away our farms and food security to out of state corporate giants in the name tax and carbon credits.

Of particular concern to me is the pollution of our ground water and estuaries from digester infrastructure leakages and the disposition of the large amounts of digestate disposal, with disastrous consequences for our wild salmon and marine mammal stocks. Clearly these activities are a violation of our tribal treaties and fishing rights.

Here are a few suggestions for provisions that should be considered in this CFS revision:

1. Limit the sale and trade of WA carbon credits to WA state else this act becomes a gold mine for less ethical states and corporations.
2. Recognize the social justice implications of this act which include the location of new pollution sources (air and water) in typically disadvantaged communities.
3. Add regulations to manure based biogas production, remove tax incentives and add taxes to mitigate the hidden pollution consequences.
4. Regulate the CO₂ production from anaerobic manure digesters.
5. Place strict regulations, enforcement and fines on pipeline leaks, water and air pollution for biogas operations.
6. Protect our salmon and marine mammals from biogas digestate water pollution and live up to our obligations under our tribal treaties.

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