

# Lucero Mendez

Hello, my name is Lucero Mendez. I live in Yakima, Washington, and I'm testifying today to strongly oppose incentives for factory farm gas in the Clean Fuel Standard. Growing up, I spent much of my childhood in Sunnyside, as my mother worked in orchards for years. I would stay with my aunt, who lived near numerous dairies and small farms. I witnessed firsthand the heavy toll of air pollution and emissions from large, under-regulated factory farms.

These concentrated animal feeding operations have overburdened our communities, outnumbering local cows. Beyond sustainable limits and violating manure managing guidelines. This has degraded Sunnyside's air quality. Contaminated soil and harmed the health of families and neighbors in our lower valley. Small farm families who have been part of our community for generations. Are being pushed out by these industrial operations, which prioritize profit over people. The clean fuel standard incentives for... Faculty Farm Gas, or biomethane create a perverse system that rewards pollution, in my opinion? By giving credits for the making captured for Manure Lagoons, the policy encourages CAFOs to produce more manure and expand herd sizes worsening our air and our water pollution. And this proportionally harms communities of color, low-income residents, like those in Yakima and Sunnyside, who face increased asthma respiratory issues and contaminated drinking water.

Methane from manure is not a clean fuel. It relies on fossil fuel infrastructure and ignores emissions from feeding production and digestate waste. Sustainable manure management alternatives exist, but receive no support under this program, and I urge the Department of Ecology to eliminate methane credits from the clean fuel standard. If this isn't possible, prohibit herd sizes increased during the 15-year credit period, close loopholes allowing capitalists to re-qualify for new credits, and require updated nutrient management plans for digester waste and revoke credits for CAFOs that are violating environmental laws. I believe Washington must prioritize community health and real climate solutions, not greenwashed factory farm pollution.

Thank you for the space, and thank you for your time.