

Carbon Free utilities by 2045

The students of WWU stand in firm support of house bill 2283, a bill to create carbon free utilities by 2045. Carbon free utilities not only helps the environment ecologically but have been increasingly competitive in price compared to their coal counter parts. PacifiCorp and Xcel Energy have both come out with statements saying that transitioning to green energy is less-so a political decision, and more of an economic one. It is estimated that energy only costs \$12/MWH for wind and \$23/MWH for solar compared with \$67/MWH for coal and \$39/MWH for natural gas. At nearly a third of the cost, PacifiCorp stated that it would be cheaper to retire 13 of their 22 coal operated plants and transition them to renewable. With entire states, like Colorado, and large energy providers like Xcel, PacifiCorp, and Puget Sound energy, already making the transition to 100% carbon free utilities, this is a great opportunity to capitalize and protect low-income populations with this policy. As outlined, with this transition there will be assistance for low-income populations as well as investments in heavily impacted communities to curb the economic effects. Students of WWU strongly support carbon free utilities in order to maintain financially stable energy sources, transition towards green energy, and protect vulnerable communities.

Therefore, WWU students recommend:

- Passing carbon free utilities house bill 2283 in order to help transition towards more renewable and sustainable energy sources
- Continuing to support and invest in communities that are impacted negatively by this energy transition in order to protect and support them.

Plastic Bag Ban

The students of WWU stand in firm support of the motion to ban plastic bags in the state of Washington. A ban is necessary to fulfill promises from legislature to preserve and protect the environment. This type of ban as outlined by SB 5432 will ban plastic bags, while recipients of assistance on programs will not be subject to the fee on plastic bags or other non-reusable alternatives. Previous plastic bag bans have worked extremely well both in Washington DC and Ireland where reductions on disposable bags was 84% and 94% respectively. While recycling paper takes more energy than recycling plastic, only about 1% of plastic bags get recycled compared with 10-15% of paper bags. And while this may be more energy spent on recycling paper, it takes far more energy to produce plastic bags. Plastic bags use around 12 million barrels of oil per year for produce 100 billion plastic bags per year (roughly how many plastic bags the US uses per year). It is incredibly important to transition away from a dependence on oil in order to meet sustainability goals. Students of WWU strongly urge a plastic bag ban to support the transition away from oil, reduce waste, and move towards more sustainable practices.

Therefore, WWU students recommend:

- A statewide ban on single use plastic bags through the passing of SB 5432
- Continued support of reducing the number of single use plastics in order to lessen our dependency on oil and fossil fuels in order to meet sustainability goals

Department of Ecology Request for Adjudication House Bill 1051

The students of WWU stand in firm support of the department of ecology's funding request for pre-adjudication work. This will be necessary for defining water rights for tribes, farmers, and other interest groups in Washington state. Additionally, this will provide tribes with necessary

definition of their rights to water helping guide policy regarding tribal water rights. Conflicts regarding water rights for tribes have been occurring increasingly over the past few years, resulting in upwards of 75 completed adjudications across Washington State to better define water rights to avoid these conflicts. There has not been any adjudication work assessing the Nooksack watershed or the Puget sound, which house bill 1051 sets aside funding for. This work is incredibly necessary for these watersheds because it goes beyond the regulatory Growth Management Act standards and helps give decision making processes to tribes regarding watershed management. This is vital for community planning, protecting water resource, and resolving or preventing water conflict. The students of WWU are in firm support of the department of ecology request for adjudication in order to define water rights for tribes, and create better boundaries for the Nooksack watershed in the Puget Sound.

Therefore, WWU students recommend:

- Passing the Department of Ecology's Funding request, House Bill 1051 in order to set aside funding for pre-adjudication work