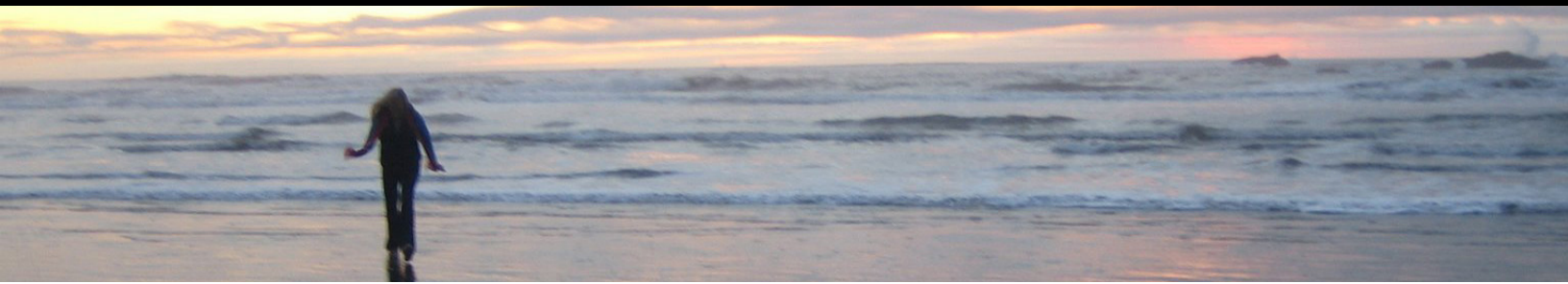


New revenue for clean water in Washington



SB 5518/HB 1614, Prime Sponsors: Senator Pridemore and Representative Ormsby

This bill will raise \$100 million for clean water infrastructure by imposing a per-barrel fee on petroleum products that contribute to water pollution.

PROBLEM AND NEXUS TO PETROLEUM

Contaminated runoff from our roads and urban areas is the number one water pollution problem in the state, and the most pressing threat that must be addressed if we are to restore Puget Sound. Petroleum products are the most significant contributor to stormwater pollution levels. Fossil fuel combustion, leaking oil and grease, and degrading asphalt materials emit hydrocarbons, zinc, arsenic and other toxic substances. Every time it rains, these pollutants are flushed into the stormwater which flows into our lakes and streams.

FUNDING NEED

Local governments are required by federal law to control stormwater pollution. The costs for compliance are enormous and legally unavoidable. Local governments are already spending more than five hundred million dollars a year and costs are increasing. Without a source of state funds, many local governments will be forced to impose additional property or utility taxes at a time when we can least afford them.

WHAT THE BILL DOES

A per-barrel fee will be imposed only on petroleum products that contribute to stormwater pollution. Covered products include gasoline, diesel, lubricants, industrial fuels and asphalt and road oils. Home heating oil, agricultural diesel and aviation fuels are EXEMPTED. This fee is imposed at the refinery, not at the gas pump. The fee will be distributed to local governments across the state through a competitive grant process. Local governments will provide matching funds for a portion of the grants.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Stormwater control is a job creator: it is labor-intensive construction work, with a mix of skilled and unskilled needs. By raising significant new funds to invest in these public works projects, a fee on oil companies would generate significant new job growth in the construction and other trade industries. Generating a new source of dedicated revenue would also free up significant dollars in the State budget that could then be spent on other priorities.