

Resolution In Opposition to the Kalama Methanol Facility

WHEREAS a mammoth, foreign-owned methanol facility has been proposed for construction on the east bank of the Columbia River in Kalama, Washington; and

WHEREAS the Washington State Democratic Party Platform calls for “immediate aggressive action to minimize climate change, as global climate change is the foremost threat to survival of Earth as we know it,” and Governor Inslee has affirmed his commitment to supporting the Paris Climate Accords, and

WHEREAS the proposed Kalama Facility would be the largest methanol facility in the world, drawing 5,000,000 gallons of water daily from the Columbia and Kalama River aquifers and utilizing 320 million cubic feet of natural gas daily – more than all other gas-fired power plants in Washington combined; and

WHEREAS 72 million gallons of flammable methanol would be stored on local soil that has a moderate to high risk of liquefying in an earthquake; and

WHEREAS three to six tankers a month would be needed every month to haul methanol to China for use in manufacturing plastics there, an increase in ship traffic that would harm endangered salmon that are already stressed and produce ship strikes likely to kill or harm whales near the mouth of the Columbia; and

WHEREAS the facility would emit more than a million tons of climate pollution per year as part of the manufacturing process, and shipping its output to Asia would generate hundreds of thousands of tons of additional climate pollution per year, while the methane emitted by fracking and pipeline transport to supply the facility would make greenhouse gas emissions rise even further; and

WHEREAS, at a time when we need to phase out reliance on fossil fuels and transition to clean energy, the project would encourage new gas drilling and fracking; and

WHEREAS the proposed facility would not replace any coal-based methanol in China, and

WHEREAS private property and historic cemetery land would be seized to make way for the three-mile long gas pipeline needed by the Kalama Facility; and

WHEREAS the proposed facility would produce no substantial domestic benefit, either locally or nationally, with only a few permanent low-wage jobs not necessarily filled from local communities;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington State Democrats firmly oppose construction of the proposed Kalama Methanol Facility, and urge the Governor and the State of Washington to reject it forthwith.

Submitted by the State Democratic Party Environment and Climate Caucus to the Washington State Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its September 10, 2017 meeting in Seattle (submitted September 9, 2017).