Members of the Legislature,

For the past 15 years, environmental groups in Washington State have organized their efforts in Olympia through the “Environmental Priorities Coalition.” Our coalition prepares a weekly Legislative “Hot List,” as a regular communication for legislators which details our positions on up to ten of our highest priority issues for the upcoming week. The purpose of this communication tool is to allow the Washington State Legislature, the Executive Branch, and media organizations to easily track the Environmental Priorities Coalition’s top priorities all session long.

As the lobbyist for Washington Conservation Voters and Washington Environmental Council, I will send this “Hot List” to you on a weekly basis. Please feel free to contact me at clifford@ctassociates.org if you have any questions.

A PDF of the Hot List can be found here — along with an archive of all Hot Lists from 2019 as the Legislative Session progresses.

Our Top Four Priorities of 2019:

**100% Clean Electricity:** Washington is uniquely positioned to achieve a fossil free, clean, and renewable electricity grid. Urgent action is needed to address climate change, and we have a critical opportunity to phase away from dirty fossil fuels, such as coal, oil, and fracked gas, and toward clean and sustainable energy sources like solar and wind. Building off of the strong work and partnerships forged through Initiative 1631, a 100% Clean Electricity standard is a complimentary and necessary policy to accelerate our efforts to achieve our state’s 2035 climate goals and invest in a clean energy economy.

**Orca Emergency Response:** Our southern resident orcas are on the brink of extinction, warranting an all-hands-on-deck commitment to bold action. At a minimum, we expect that the legislature to take action on the three biggest threats to orcas: their lack of food, and impacts from noise and pollution. Legislation must address healthy shoreline habitat, establish a “slow-go zone” around the orcas, and replace toxic chemicals with safer alternatives. These specific actions are the building blocks to address the three biggest threats to orcas.

**Oil Spill Prevention:** Washington continues to face significant risks of oils spills in Puget Sound and the coast. These risks threaten local economies and the survival of iconic species like salmon and orcas. To address these risks, the state must have the same protections on barges and other vessels that exist for large tankers, require an emergency response tug that can protect high-risk areas like the San Juan Islands, and ensure that oil drilling will never happen off of Washington’s coast.
Reduce Plastic Pollution: Thin plastic bags are used for only a few minutes and discarded. Only 6% of these bags are ever recycled. Plastic bags blow into our waterways and the ocean, clog the stomachs of wildlife, and break down into smaller pieces that also get eaten. Plastic bags also clog recycling equipment—costing money because they have to be extracted—and are the major contaminant in our commercial compost. The Reusable Bag Act would eliminate thin carry-home plastic bags at all retail establishments and include a pass-through charge to motivate people to bring their own reusable bags and help cover the stores’ cost of more expensive bags.

This Week’s Top Senate Actions:

**S-0041.1: Concerning net metering (Solar Fairness Act).**

**SUPPORT**

Senate Environment, Energy & Technology: Public Hearing on Wednesday, January 16th

- Strengthens net metering standards, protects homeowners, and expands the emerging solar market in the state.
- Solar owners deserve full credit for the power they make. Unfortunately, consumers statewide are often unable to benefit fully from the generation of solar energy on their rooftops and properties because Washington has some of the weakest net metering policies in the nation.

**SB 5026: Concerning the placement of planning boundaries in conjunction with parcel boundaries.**

**OPPOSE**

Senate Local Government: Public Hearing on Thursday, January 17th

- Allows for the expansion of urban growth areas, though not based on population projection or need.
- Ignores the difference in terrain, the land use designation, or other urban growth boundary limitations such as floodplains or steep slopes.

**SB 5115: Concerning appliance efficiency standards.**

**SUPPORT**
Senate Environment, Energy & Technology: Public Hearing on Thursday, January 17th

- Sets energy and water efficiency standards for common consumer products, saving consumers money on utility bills.
- Requires that electric hot water heaters sold in the state be grid-ready to enable future utility demand response programs, which is important as we move to a cleaner electric system.

**SB 5116: Supporting Washington’s clean energy economy and transitioning to a clean, affordable, and reliable energy future (100% Clean Electricity).**

**SUPPORT Senate Environment, Energy & Technology: Public Hearing on Thursday, January 17th**

- One of the four environmental community priorities of 2019.
- Moves Washington away from fossil fuels and toward 100% Clean Electricity, making our state a national leader.
- A 100% Clean Electricity portfolio reduces pollution that causes climate change, expands our clean energy economy, and sets a foundation to reduce pollution from other sectors like transportation.

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**about the coalition**

The Environmental Priorities Coalition is a network of over twenty leading environmental groups in Washington state that influence policy at the state level. For over a decade, the Coalition has selected joint priority issues to work on during legislative session to help focus environmental community resources and best achieve our shared goals.