



Washington State Catholic Conference

The Public Policy Voice of the Bishops of Washington State

Initiative-2117

Initiative 2117 would repeal the current Climate Commitment Act (CCA), the state's climate bill passed in 2021, and bars implementation of any similar programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the future.

The CCA sets a limit on the total carbon emissions in the state with the goal of reducing total green house gas emissions by 95% by 2050. Businesses who produce more than 25,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions must buy allowances equal to their excess greenhouse gas emissions. Allowances are available when other companies lower emissions. The allowances can be obtained through auctions hosted by the state department of ecology or on a secondary market similar to a stock market.

The CCA program provides an incentive to lower emissions by allowing businesses that reduce emissions to sell their remaining carbon emission allowance permits to other companies.

Proceeds from the auctions are used across the state, focusing on projects that enhance clean transportation, improve air quality, and support energy-efficient infrastructures. At least 35% of the funds are directed towards projects benefiting overburdened communities, with a significant focus on environmental justice.

WHAT INITIATIVE PROPONENTS SAY

CCA has raised Washington's gas prices by 50 cents/gallon.

Costs of the program are passed on to consumers, raising prices for necessities such as food and other items in the supply chain.

WHAT INITIATIVE OPPONENTS SAY

Instead of a fee on pollution being paid by the largest contributors, repeal would shift the burden of paying for the impacts of pollution onto communities, workers, and families.

CCA raised \$1.8 billion in its first year. If successful the repeal will strip away investments of CCA funds in community priorities across the state — from programs that lower costs for Washingtonians to transit service to wildfire prevention programs.

OUR POSITION

While opponents of the CCA raise some valid concerns about costs of the program being passed on to consumers, with negative impacts on low-income individuals and non-profits, such concerns can be addressed more effectively through amendments and appropriate use of the proceeds from the program than through a complete bar to necessary climate action.

The impacts of climate change are also hardest on people living with lower incomes. Eliminating the act and its long term impacts on climate change to address one factor causing higher prices is not a sound solution.

Pope Francis wrote in 2015, "there is an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced, for example, substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy." Washington state's Climate Commitment Act sets a national example for responding to this call, one we cannot afford to dismantle. Please vote NO on I-2117.