



Legislation Text

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Clerk 08/22/24

A MOTION expressing the King County council's opposition to the approval of Washington state Initiative 2117, which, if approved by voters, would repeal sections of the Climate Commitment Act and prohibit state agencies from implementing any type of carbon tax credit trading.

WHEREAS, Washington state Initiative 2117, which, if approved by the voters, would repeal sections of the Climate Commitment Act and prohibit state agencies from implementing any type of carbon tax credit trading, will be before Washington state voters in the general election on November 5, 2024, and

WHEREAS, in 2021, Chapter 316, Laws of Washington 2021, known as the Washington Climate Commitment Act, was enacted, which sets annual emission limits for major emitters, such as oil refineries and utilities, and establishes a market-based program, which is a cap-and-invest program, to reduce carbon pollution and achieve greenhouse gas limits set in Washington state law, and

WHEREAS, the Washington Climate Commitment Act requires revenues raised from the auction of emissions allowances must be re-invested into projects and grants that help to achieve state climate change mitigation and resilience goals, and

WHEREAS, the Washington Climate Commitment Act requires that a minimum of 35 percent of auction revenue be used for projects that directly benefit vulnerable populations with overburdened communities and Initiative 2117 would eliminate the revenue source for these projects, and

WHEREAS, during the 2023 and 2024 legislative sessions, state lawmakers allocated about \$2.8 billion of anticipated revenue from the Climate Commitment Act to climate programs across the state and Initiative

2117 would eliminate the revenue source for these programs, and

WHEREAS, revenues from the Climate Commitment Act advance or directly support King County in meeting its climate operational goals set forth in the Strategic Climate Action Plan, adopted by Motion 15866. Climate Commitment Act revenues will support regional trails, including Eastrail, flexible funding to support transit operations and services, support for the Metro transit department's Access paratransit operations, free youth transit fare, capital infrastructure to support a zero-emission transit fleet, installation of electric vehicle chargers, energy retrofit and solar power grants for public buildings, landfill methane reduction, and grants to support local government planning related to climate. Initiative 2117 would eliminate Climate Commitment Act revenues supporting these investments, and

WHEREAS, revenues from the Climate Commitment Act will advance or directly support climate initiatives in cities, schools, community based organizations, and businesses in King County, such as solar installations for Federal Way public schools, air quality mitigation equipment to residential, recreational, and educational facilities in South King County, home electrification and appliance rebate program, grants to support green jobs, workforce, and infrastructure, grants to improve urban tree canopy, riparian protection grants, grants to reduce flooding and improve salmon habitat, and research to address disproportionate asthma rates of residents within a ten mile radius of Sea-Tac airport. Initiative 2117 would eliminate Climate Commitment Act revenues supporting these investments, and

WHEREAS, approval of Initiative 2117 by Washington voters would decrease funding for state investments in transportation, clean air, renewable energy, conservation, and emissions-reduction, and without such state investments, King County's goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address impacts from climate change set forth in the Strategic Climate Action Plan would be adversely impacted, and

WHEREAS, RCW 42.17A.555(1) authorizes the King County council to take action "to express a collective decision, or to actually vote on a motion, to support or oppose a ballot measure so long as (a) the agenda includes the title and number of the ballot proposition, and (b) members of the public and

councilmembers are afforded an approximately equal opportunity to express an opposing view," and

WHEREAS, consistent with RCW 42.17A.55, the King County council considered Initiative 2117 at its INSERT DATE, regular meeting, and provided members of the public and council an approximately equal opportunity to express support or opposition to Initiative 2117;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the King County council:

The King County council expresses its opposition to Initiative 2117 and encourages the citizens of King County to reject Initiative 2117, a measure seeking to repeal sections of the 2021 Washington Climate Commitment Act, and to bar state agencies from imposing any type of program involving the trading of carbon tax credits, at the November 5, 2024, general election.