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Sent: Sunday, April 22, 2018 1:24 PM

To: Council; Satpal Sidhu; Barbara Brenner; Barry Buchanan; Rud Browne; Todd Donovan; Timothy Ballew; Tyler Byrd

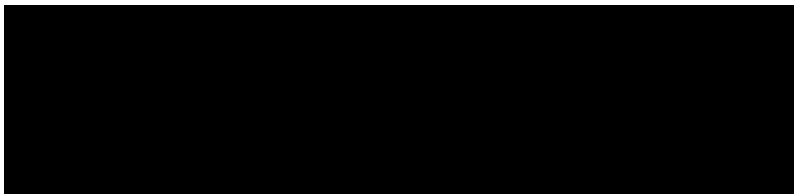
Cc: Jack Louws; PDS


Subject: Grasping the longstanding nature of impacts of fossil fuel disasters - Support for moving forward with code amendments to Major Permit Review Process and other related codes

Dear Whatcom County Council:

I came upon this 4/21/2018 article from USA Today, "Thousands of cleanup workers that claim BP oil spill made them sick haven't had day in court," which was published the day after the 8th anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. I thought it was a relevant article for you all to consider as you are working on putting together possible code amendments to the County's Major Project Permit Review Process, and other related zoning codes.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2018/04/21/bp-oil-spill-workers-sick-court/538851002/>





Thousands of cleanup workers that claim BP oil spill made them sick haven't...

On the eighth anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon rig explosion that set off the worst oil spill in U.S. histor...

From the article:

"It all boiled down to the interpretation of two words: 'manifested' and 'diagnosed.'

"The original medical claims settlement set aside a separate litigation process for what were called 'Later-Manifested Physical Conditions.' Lead class plaintiffs' attorney Steve Herman said that was supposed to refer to cancer and other conditions that don't show up for years after the exposure.

"Instead, the settlement defined "later-manifested physical conditions" as any conditions "diagnosed" after April 16, 2012, regardless of when the condition actually manifested, or appeared. That meant people who got sick right away while cleaning up the oil during 2010 and 2011, but didn't get an official doctor's diagnosis until mid-2012 or later, were relegated to fighting separate cases, first in mediation with BP and then in court.

"The latest report from Garretson shows BP has not agreed to pay a single one of those claims in mediation. Herman said the first of the court cases are now starting to be heard."

Thus, I think it is important for us all to grasp the longstanding nature of impacts such disasters have on community members, workers, and certainly the marine life and territories that are stricken. Your work to protect the County from liability for such disasters and to, as much as possible, safeguard the well-being of local residents and our territories, is definitely essential. Rather than being over-bearing in any way, such efforts are actually the least of what should be considered in light of fossil fuel related disasters that are still happening, more types of which are being discovered. I encourage the Council to support Council Member Donovan in the process to develop an excellent resolution to promptly create measures that will help protect the safety and well being of the land, air, water, and life forms in Whatcom County. Beyond that, I call on you to continue to think creatively about any other means that can be employed to move our County away from having fossil fuel enterprises be any kind of "bedrock" for our community economy (as they were referred to in a recent Council committee meeting) because as the article warns us, that kind of foundation can all go up in flames and poison lives for years.

Sincerely,
Dena Jensen
Birch Bay

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