



Community Coalition for Environmental Justice
1620 18th Ave Suite 10
Seattle WA 98122

March 4, 2012

Governor Christine Gregoire
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Re: Fish Consumption Rates and Rule-Making by the Department of Ecology

Dear Governor Gregoire,

The Community Coalition for Environmental Justice represents the environmental interests of poor people and people of color in the Seattle area. We were delighted to learn that the Department of Ecology proposed more appropriate standards for the consumption of fish than are currently in place, but have been disturbed to read of the opposing comments and, in particular, by an attempt to delay or defeat the implementation of these standards by a “sneak attack” through a misuse of the budget process.

Specifically, we object to section 301(9) of ESB 5967, at page 110 of the First Engrossed Bill as published on March 3, 2012. Some of our friends have already testified before the Senate on this issue. This provision requires the Department to report to the Legislature before implementing the standards, which would cause major delays, and misuses the budget process by burying this action in the budget rather than in a separate bill where the public can comment more easily.

If this bill should pass the House with this provision, would you please veto it?

For background information on this issue, please see the Seattle Times story on fish consumption rates among Native and Asian people

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2012448836_tribalfish26m.html

Our Board includes a teacher of environmental science who pointed out that while these issues appear to concern mostly these groups, there really is no safe level of the pollutants being considered. Therefore any improvement in the consumption standards will benefit everyone who consumes fish.

Thanks very much for considering this issue.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Betz-Zall. Board Member, CCEJ

Cc:

Representative Frank Chopp, Speaker of the House
Representative Richard DeBolt, House Minority Leader
Representative Eric Pettigrew, Majority Caucus Chair
Representative Dan Kristiansen, Minority Caucus Chair
Dennis McLerran, EPA Regional Administrator
Ted Sturdevant, Department of Ecology Director