

January 11, 2022



King County Regional Policy Committee

RE: Waste-to-Energy Committee

Dear Chair von Reichbauer and Members of the Regional Policy Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the proposed ordinance to establish an Advisory Committee on transitioning to waste-to-energy technology for the disposal of municipal solid waste. Zero Waste Washington works for policy change for a healthy and waste-free world. We envision a just, equitable, and sustainable future where we all produce, consume, and reuse responsibly.

We are opposed to Waste-to-Energy incineration and instead support King County and city initiatives to reduce, recycling and compost so that we can divert/prevent the 70% of materials that are going to our landfill. King County's 2019 waste characterization study found that 62% of the waste disposed that year was readily recyclable and an additional 9% had limited recyclability.

The proposed ordinance does not at all consider the alternative approach.

Our primary concerns about Waste-to-Energy incineration are:

- It will be extremely costly.
- We would be locked into waste contracts (i.e., the opposite of working to reduce waste!).
- The materials with the highest BTU are those that are best to recycle.
- Even if lower than older technology, there are still toxic chemicals in the emissions (as well as significant CO2 issues). Startup and shutdown are particularly problematic. And human errors happen. Thus, this is an environmental justice issue, depending on the siting of the facility.

Thank you for consideration of our comments. I can be reached at heather@zerowastewashington.org or (206) 441-1790.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Trim", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Heather Trim
Executive Director