

RESOLUTION NO. _____

OPPOSING THE MODEL TOXICS CONTROL ACT TAX INCREASE

WHEREAS, HB 3181 / SB 6851 would increase the state's Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) tax from 0.7 percent to 2.0 percent to help pay for stormwater projects; and

WHEREAS, HB 3181 / SB 6851 is estimated to cost businesses and consumers in the state of Washington approximately \$224 million per year; and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Revenue estimates that a two-percent MTCA tax is the equivalent of a 5-7 cent increase to fuel prices at the pump; and

WHEREAS, there has been little discussion of this proposed tax increase at a time when Washington businesses and families, especially low-income families, are struggling to cope with current economic conditions; and

WHEREAS, this tax increase will severely impact local refineries; and

WHEREAS, Washington motorists already pay the sixth-highest gas tax in the nation and the highest gas tax in the Northwest; and

WHEREAS, the additional costs imposed on fuel products by HB 3181/SB 6851 could impair the ability of lawmakers to utilize new gas taxes to pay for critically needed transportation infrastructure to improve safety and relieve congestion; and

WHEREAS, the petroleum industry is a key segment of Washington State's manufacturing base, responsible for more than 20,000 high-paying jobs in the state, and a critically important local employer;

WHEREAS, the two refineries in Skagit County provide over 650 direct jobs and 300 contractor jobs that pay at least double the average wage; and

WHEREAS, the petroleum industry pays more than \$182 million per year in taxes to the state of Washington and the taxes on a Washington State refinery are approximately double the taxes on a comparably sized facility in California; and

WHEREAS, petroleum refineries in Washington State are responsible corporate citizens, having invested more than \$590 million over the last five years on retrofitting their plants to produce cleaner burning fuels and conform to new environmental and safety regulations; and

WHEREAS, some jurisdictions have yet to adopt broad local low impact development incentives and retrofits so that individual homeowners have education and incentives to personally reduce or eliminate stormwater runoff even though the Washington State Department of Ecology adopted such a manual years ago; and

WHEREAS, local communities and counties currently have programs and facilities in place to address Stormwater issues, and their efforts should be supported by the Legislature.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Skagit County Board of Commissioners, in recognition of the facts stated above, does hereby oppose the proposal to dramatically increases the MTCA tax, as contained in HB 3181 / SB 6851, or any similar legislation and urges the Washington State Legislature to reject this measure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Skagit County Board of Commissioners encourages the Legislature, should it find sufficient evidence to support the need for new Stormwater management programs, to develop a more scientifically justifiable and equitable funding mechanism than that proposed in HB 3181 / SB 6851.

PASSED this 22 day of February, 2010.



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Sharon D. Dillon
Sharon D. Dillon, Chair

Ron Wesen
Ron Wesen, Commissioner

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt
Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

Approved as to form:

M. Miller (2/23/2010)
Civil Deputy Prosecutor

Attest:

Linda Haneman
Clerk of the Board