

We are writing to request that you immediately cancel your membership and withdraw your participation in the Whatcom Business Alliance (WBA). We appreciate the contribution you make to the community, and are concerned that WBA's ongoing promotion of fossil fuel interests will be detrimental to your reputation.

The WBA has recently shown itself to be managed by partisan political activists advocating for unchecked fossil fuel expansion in Whatcom County. The majority of Whatcom County residents recognize climate change as a threat to our community, and oppose expansion of fossil fuel projects in our county.

Over the past six years, Whatcom County has faced a series of highly controversial proposals to export coal and dramatically increase traffic of explosive oil trains. These debates have been contentious; a lot of smart business owners and many business associations have kept their reputations at arm's length from these politics.

We're writing you because we've never seen your company take a stance on these issues before, and because we think that you may not be aware that WBA appears to be leading the political charge in favor of coal and crude oil exports through our community. WBA is promoting fossil fuel expansion in your name, yet many of your customers would be appalled at the activities and messages being promoted by WBA. Here are a couple of examples:

**STEP UP** Step Up @WBASepUp · 7m  
Fossil fuels make modern life possible. #CherryPointWA #Whatcom  
[buff.ly/2p980Aa](http://buff.ly/2p980Aa)



**STEP UP** Step Up @WBASepUp · 11m  
Think we can limit economic activity and still support jobs in Whatcom County?  
Think again. #Bellingham [buff.ly/2qsGQs3](http://buff.ly/2qsGQs3)

Honorable Council Members,

On behalf of BP Cherry Point Refinery, please accept the following comments as part of the official record associated with Resolution 2016-256B BP is opposed to the Ordinance titled "Interim ordinance imposing a moratorium on applications - Cherry Point". BP supports the written comments from the Whatcom Business Alliance submitted on March 20, 2017 and attached herein and writes separately to reinforce a few key points about our opposition to the Cherry Point development moratorium

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WBA, through its Step Up campaign, is responsible for the proliferation of "Protect Cherry Point Jobs" yard signs that you have probably seen in the area. Ironically, many labor leaders are concerned that **exporting raw materials is one of the biggest threats to local jobs.**

Last fall, an investigation by the Public Disclosure Commission found that WBA President Tony Larson was illegally involved in secretly funding political campaigns. It was reported in the Cascadia Weekly:

As noted in the PDC investigation, Larson recruited the committee's official treasurer; obtained possession of monetary contributions to Clear Ballot Choices, and deposited all contributions in the committee's campaign depository; conducted meetings with vendors, without the involvement of the committee's registered officers; received invoices from vendors for payment; and communicated contribution and expenditure information to Clear Ballot Choices' treasurer for reporting purposes, without sharing similar information with the committee's other registered officers. He also controlled Clear Ballot Choices' checkbook and made payments to vendors. Under the law, this last duty is specifically reserved for a political committee's registered treasurer or deputy treasurer. In short, with his detailed knowledge of County Council methods and procedures Larson ran the PIT's extensive political ground game against representative democracy, but at no point was Larson ever publicly registered as an officer or responsible leader for the committee. (Cascadia Weekly, Nov. 2 2016.  
<http://www.cascadiaweekly.com/cw/currents/28015>)

We would be amazed to learn that your company is affiliated with and directly or indirectly supports these kinds of inflammatory messages and divisive tactics. As the 2017 County Council elections approach, these issues are likely going to garner increased attention. We will be working to daylight the deleterious role that the WBA is playing in local public policy. We urge you to take the opportunity now to avoid being caught up in this growing controversy.

Please contact us immediately to confirm that you will contact the WBA (360.746.0418) to cancel your membership and ask that your name be removed from the list of members on their website: <https://www.whatcombusinessalliance.com/member-directory/>. Please respond and let us know your answer by June 5th.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,



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