Washington Issues

The Western States Petroleum Association helps develop and support sound public policies that sustain the affordable fuel resources needed to drive Washington’s economy.

Washington’s five refineries supply gasoline for automobiles, clean diesel for trucks, fuel for the ferry and shipping fleets, and aviation fuels crucial to the daily lives of everyone in the state. These products support jobs and vital services for Washingtonians and provide important tax revenues for state and local governments.

Clean Air Rule

Washington employers continue making great progress in reducing carbon emissions and the state stands among low-carbon leaders across the nation and around the world. The Clean Air Rule puts Washington manufacturers at a disadvantage against national and international competitors. It increases energy costs to Washington families and small businesses, making it more expensive to heat homes, to drive to work or school and to buy groceries and other necessities. We believe that incentives to promote innovation and private investment, rather than an inflexible and expensive rule, are the best way to continue reducing greenhouse gas emissions in our state.

Carbon Policy

WSPA and its members believe that climate change should be addressed at national and international levels. State-level policy in Washington would have a negligible impact on mitigating climate change but could have a significant negative impact on our state’s businesses. WSPA and its members believe a carbon tax should not be duplicative, placing expensive and unnecessary burdens on already heavily taxed industries and consumers. Nor should it limit business opportunities for Washington employers that serve markets
beyond the state’s borders.

Oil Spill Program Funding
Washington State has one of the best oil spill response programs in the nation, and from day one it has been funded completely by the petroleum industry through a “barrel tax” on crude oil shipments. Several years ago, without opposition from the industry, that tax was extended from marine shipments to also include rail shipments. But now the State Department of Ecology wants to also tax shipments by pipeline, which are already overseen by the State Utilities and Transportation Commission. But the Department reports only 3% of all spills are related to our industry. So instead, we propose a three-year increase in our own tax rate on marine and rail shipments. During that time, Ecology should be required to further study the source of spills and create a funding model in which responsibility is shared with those who are creating the problems, so they have an incentive to improve.

Hazardous Substances Tax
WSPA and its members oppose increasing hazardous substances tax. The Model Toxics Control Act fund is fundamentally sound – revenue collections fell due to recent lower oil prices but are forecasted to return to pre-2011 levels this year. The problem for the fund is with spending and prioritization, not with revenues. The Department of Ecology’s 2018 supplemental budget request claims a $69M “shortfall” in the fund, but details $75M that has been diverted from the fund to cover general fund spending at Ecology and other agencies. And the Legislature has diverted over $270M from the fund and expanded spending to cover $300M in stormwater projects over last dozen years. It’s illogical to take money out of the fund or use it for different purposes and then argue that tax increase is needed to fill the gap. It’s time to get back to focusing MTCA on what voters intended it to do – addressing hazardous waste clean-ups

Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS)
WSPA and its members oppose the low carbon fuel standard as an expensive and unproven experiment for Washington. The California Energy Commission estimates that
that state’s LCFS already adds 9.5 cents per gallon of gas, and the program is only halfway
to full implementation. In Washington, LCFS would be a “hidden gas tax” on top of what is
already second-highest state and federal gas tax in the nation (67.8 cents per gallon).
That’s why the state’s own Climate Executive and Legislative Work-group (CLEW)
considered and rejected LCFS as one of most expensive emission-reduction tools. And
there are real questions about whether the LCFS is even feasible because the fuel
blendstocks required for LCFS compliance do not exist at market volumes or are
prohibitively expensive.

Related News & Resources

Californians and petroleum industry are partners in our shared energy future

Statement from Catherine Reheis-Boyd, President, Western States Petroleum Association “There’s an
unhelpful belief that is being pushed by some that […]

A New Look for our Future

We are at a tipping point in how we produce, distribute, consume and benefit from energy. And while
we know […]

WSPA Bolsters In-House Advocacy Capability

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The Western States Petroleum Association is pleased to announce that Luis
Sanchez has joined the trade group […]

WSPA Statement on AB 1745

Statement from WSPA President Catherine Reheis-Boyd on AB 1745 “WSPA and its member
companies oppose AB 1745, a crude […]
WSPA builds in-house lobbying team

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—The Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA) welcomes Margo Parks as the newest addition to their organization. “Margo’s energy, enthusiasm […]

WSPA hires international public relations expert as new Manager of Strategic Partnerships

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—The Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA) welcomes Argelia León as a new addition to their organization. “As we work […]

Statement on Cap and Trade Auction Results – Aug 2017

Statement from WSPA President Catherine Reheis-Boyd on August’s quarterly cap and trade auction results. Today’s successful carbon auction quarterly […]

PRESS RELEASES

Statement on California’s Cap-and-Trade Legislation

“Last year, when California policymakers established the world’s most stringent 2030 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions goal, all knew that achieving […]

REPORTS

LAEDC Study

Oil and Gas in California: The industry, it’s economic contribution and user industries at risk in 2015. Executive Summary, The […]

California State Water Resources Control Board SB 4 Monitoring Requirements

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is required to develop groundwater monitoring criteria in consultation with DOGGR and other […]
FACT SHEETS

Setting the Record Straight: Water and Hydraulic Fracturing in California

Despite repeated claims that hydraulic fracturing in California uses “millions of gallons of water per well,” the amount of water [...]