

August 19th, 2021

To: Commissioner Steinbrueck  
Commissioner Bowman  
Commissioner Cho  
Commissioner Calkins  
Commissioner Felleman  
Executive Director Metruck  
Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Director Gheisar  
Maritime Managing Director Stephanie Jones-Stebbins  
Senior Director Engineering, Environment and Sustainability Sandra Kilroy  
Managing Director Economic Development Division David McFadden

Dear Port of Seattle Commissioners and Staff,

**We urge you to reconsider allowing toxic cruise ship sailings from Seattle to Alaska, and begin the transition to a cruise free Salish Sea.**

**Now is the time to prioritize public health instead of cruise executive wealth.** The global pandemic still rages, cruise ships have proven to supply super spreader conditions, populations in Washington and Alaska are not fully vaccinated, and Canada has cancelled 2021 cruises to protect their communities.

**Cruise ships carry health impacts beyond spreading Coronavirus.** Smokestacks on board emit toxins, carcinogens and particulate matter--the number one cause of environmental related deaths--harming passengers, crew, destination cities, and coastline communities along the route.

**These same smokestacks are also killing our chances at avoiding the worst of the climate emergency we are in.** Pre-covid, greenhouse gas impacts from the round trip Seattle-Alaska sailing season, along with their associated airline flights, were equal to about 1/3 of the GHG emissions of the entire city of Seattle for the whole year! We should not be relying on such fossil fuel intensive practices, rather we should be actively seeking less harmful tourism practices, less harmful job creation, less harmful uses for the public lands under control of the Port Authority.

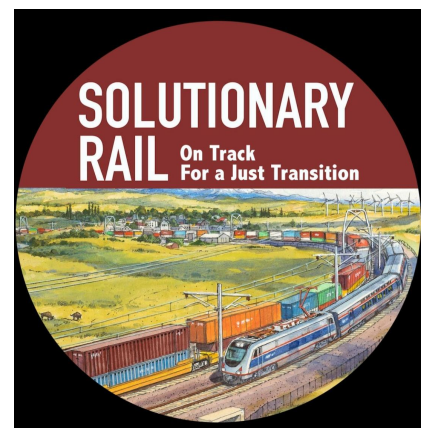
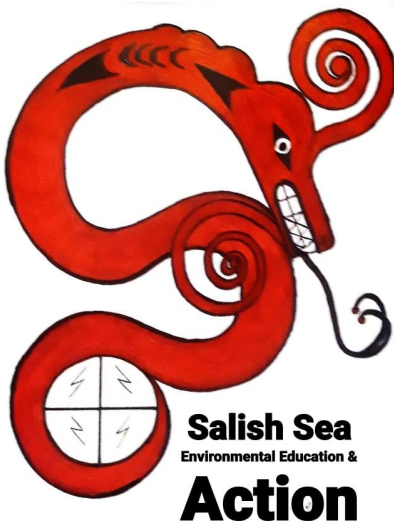
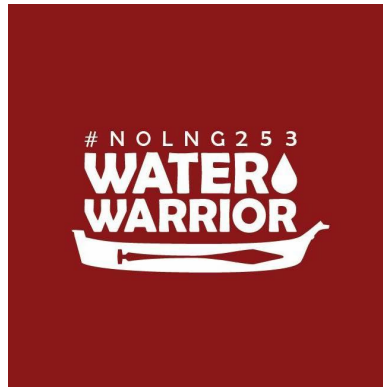
**The harm from these polluting ships is acutely felt in our waters, affecting water quality, marine life and ocean acidification.** Endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales and other whale species can be killed in ship strikes, and the massive ships impede sonar, making it harder to find food or communicate. Ships often dump pollution directly into the water, including engine waste, human waste, and trash. Toxins build up in marine life (and those who eat them!). Climate change, exacerbated by these ships, is warming and acidifying the ocean, harming shellfish and marine life. Although most of the dumping happens off the coast of Canada or in international waters, pollution doesn't respect these colonial borders and affects the marine life and water quality of the entire Salish Sea.

**We care about the health, safety, and quality of life for on-board workers.** Many cruise ship hospitality [workers earn very low pay and suffer harsh conditions](#). Last year during outbreaks of COVID-19, tens of thousands of workers were stranded on the ships for months, often while not receiving any pay. Meanwhile cruise company [CEOs made millions](#), more even in 2020 than in 2019.

The Port's Century Agenda commits to equity, safety, and fairness; we should not be welcoming or supporting an industry that so flagrantly violates these values.

**The pandemic offers a valuable lesson and a vital warning: we have the opportunity to build back better.** It is time for us to prioritize health. Healthy communities, healthy marine life, healthy jobs, and a healthy planet.

Sincerely,





WASHINGTON PHYSICIANS  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



**POWER PAST  
FRACKED GAS**

**STAND**  
.earth





Build a better Future. Local Climate Action



People for Climate Action Seattle  
North Olympic Orca Pod