

## Rebecca Messinger

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**From:** Clark County <webmaster@clark.wa.gov>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 18, 2023 6:50 PM  
**To:** publiccomment  
**Subject:** Council Hearing Public Comment

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# Clark County

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Submitted on Sat, 11/18/2023 - 6:49 PM

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**Subject**

Climate Change and Resiliency Element Public Participation Plan

**Date of Hearing**

Tue, 11/28/2023

**Comment**

From Don Steinke

To the Clark County Council and staff

My response to the comments received on your Public Participation Plan for the Climate Amendment to the GMA

Comment 1 made by others: The proposed future will be a nightmare.

Steinke's response

We're going to need a lot more energy to provide for population growth. The cheapest form of new energy is wind and solar.

In most of America, the price of solar and wind is already less than the cost of fossil fuels.

The cost of solar for Clark PUD's first community solar project in 2015 was \$5.20 per watt. Their new community solar project at the Port of Camas Washougal is only \$1.70 per watt. The price of solar in Clark County has fallen 70% in the last 8 years. Adjusting for inflation, it's more like an 80% drop.

According to Wright's law, the cost of any new technology drops a fixed percent every time the number made is doubled.

The cost of solar will continue to fall at least 20% every time the number installed is doubled because people learn by doing and because of economies of scale.

My solar panels provide the electricity to power my electric vehicle. I drive on sunshine. Within 20 years most of us will be doing that. Our future is bright.

There are now more than 9000 electric cars in Clark County and more than 2500 roof-top solar projects in operation.

Amazon already has 10,000 electric delivery vans on the road including some in the Camas area. Amazon has ordered 90,000 more to be delivered as soon as the manufacturers can get them made. Amazon is also the largest developer of solar projects in the world. Their Climate Commitment Arena in Seattle has 1.2 megawatts of solar and Amazon aims to make it Net Carbon Zero and Certified Living Building.

The five story PAE Building in Portland is a net carbon zero building and certified as a Living Building. They did it without government subsidies. The PAE firm welcomes developers from around the world to tour and see how it can be done. And on Swan Island, Daimler-Freightliner is developing electric semis. They are creating a bright future, not a nightmare.

Comment 2 made by others: The Texas Public Policy Foundation is cited:

Steinke's response: According to Wikipedia, The Texas Public Policy Foundation is funded by Exxon-Mobil, Chevron, The Koch Industries and the GeoPrison Group.

They don't speak for all Texans. Texas is the Saudi Arabia of wind, and The Tesla gigafactory in Texas is producing EVs including Cybertrucks.

Comment 3 by others: The Texas Public Policy Foundation asserts that because of subsidies, the true cost of EVs is much higher than people realize.

Steinke's response: However, the True Cost of GASOLINE is also higher than we realize, much higher. According to the International Monetary Fund, total subsidies for oil last year was \$7 trillion. For example:

- We subsidized fracking technology during the first decade of this century.
- Congress allocated \$5 billion this year to clean up abandoned oil and gas wells.
- According to the EPA, each dollar spent reducing tailpipe emissions will save between \$10 and \$99 in health care costs
- According to the Fifth National Climate Assessment required by Congress and published on Nov 14, 2023 weather-related disasters in the U.S. cause about \$150 billion each year in direct losses, according to the report, and the cost is expected to go up as the Earth gets hotter.
- We've stationed one aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf and one in South China Sea to protect Oil tankers.
- Vancouver's annual Peace and Justice Fair hosts an EV car show in recognition that our dependence on oil leads to wars. We spent more than a \$trillion dollars at war in the Middle east since 1990.
- Taxpayers are also subsidizing carbon capture and sequestration which accomplishes nothing and takes funding away from more cost effective programs. CCS is a nightmare because of cost.
- <https://www.economist.com/business/2023/05/21/can-carbon-removal-become-a-trillion-dollar-business>

That is taxpayer money that is not reflected at the pump.

Comment 4 by others: The Texas Public Policy Foundation also implies that subsidies are bad.

Steinke's response: Subsidies can be good. Our government subsidized communications satellites back in the 60's. Now we don't need to wait until midnight to call our kids in Seattle.

Our government subsidized the internet. Now everything has changed.

Our government subsidized rural electrification over the objections of conservatives.

Subsidies help jumpstart new technologies and create economies of scale. The cost of solar panels installed in the Clark PUD community solar project in 2015 was \$5.20 per watt. The cost of the solar panels being installed this fall at the Port of Camas Washougal is \$1.70 per watt, before tax credits. People learn by doing and the price comes down.

The same applies to batteries in electric vehicles. The MSRP for a 2016 Nissan Leaf with a range of 84 miles was \$32,000.

The MSRP of a 2023 Chevy Bolt with a range of 259 miles is only \$27,000 before tax credits, and is union made in America.

Comment 6 made by others: There is no climate emergency.

However, about thirty years ago, our legislature established the Climate Impacts Group at the University of Washington. They recently provided a climate forecast for Cowlitz County for the 2040-50 time period.

They estimate that the average summer temperature in Cowlitz County will be 5.9 degrees warmer. See page 119 in this document.

<https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/s35feqecew9u964pj0jzqd2h7buksqcx>

Comment7 made by others: EV's are unwanted

Steinke's response: Nonsense. Demand for EVs is so high that dealers add surcharges up to \$10,000 to the price. Try to buy a new Chevy Bolt and see for yourself.

Comment 8 made by others: It's also not even clear if the nation has the electricity capacity to handle the shift to a market only selling electric vehicles.

Steinke's response: My solar panels charge my electric vehicles. I drive on sunshine. By 2040, millions of people will be doing the same. That future is what the fossil fuel industry is attempting to delay.

Comment 9 made by others: The Texas study doesn't look at the environmental harms of lithium mining which can pollute air and water with heavy metals, massively erode soil, use copious water and energy in mining, and disrupt wildlife habitats.

Steinke's response: The harm to the environment caused by the oil industry is a thousand times the harm caused by electric batteries.

Comment 9, made by others: Don't reduce our freedoms

Steinke's Response: For the last 100 years, the word freedom in practice has usually meant freedom to pollute or the freedom of corporations to abuse labor, endanger others or to form monopolies. Continued in the next comment.