

Peter Goldmark  
Commissioner of Public Lands  
1111 Washington Street SE  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Commissioner Goldmark:

As religious leaders representing a diversity of denominations across the State of Washington, **we are writing to oppose coal export from Washington ports.**

Although we come from different faith traditions, we all hold sacred the belief that God created the world and it is good. In your role as Washington State's Commissioner of Public Lands, you make decisions every day that impact the health of our children, the vibrancy of Washington's economy, and the future of God's creation here and across the Pacific. We urge you to say no to coal exports from our state.

Religious communities know that we must transition away from the mining, burning, and exporting of coal since breaks the covenant with our Creator. Coal is a public health threat through all stages of its production and use because it poisons our air and water. As pastoral leaders, we can not stand by quietly as the health of people and God's creation is compromised.

Shipping Montana and Wyoming strip-mined coal through Northwest ports encourages the building of new coal plants across Asia that would lock in decades of toxic pollution and carbon emissions. This smog from the Far East would blow right back across the Pacific to Washington to acidify our ocean, poison our fish, and contribute further to warming our planet.

Closer to home, exporting coal from our state would impose huge risks and costs on our communities. Mile and a half-long trains would block our streets and large amounts of toxic coal dust would accumulate along rail routes and at coal ports. It is a bad choice for the health and well-being of the towns involved, and a terrible legacy for future generations. We need to say no.

There are also good economic reasons to oppose coal export from Washington's deep water ports. Better jobs can be created from the taxpayer dollars that would be needed to build rail overpasses and other infrastructure for the coal trains. Continued investment in renewable energy will create more jobs, more wealth, and the healthy and productive future we want for our families. Committing our shorelines, rail lines, and port communities to coal export is a dead end economic strategy, which will foreclose more robust and sustainable economic development. We can and must do better.

Shipping coal through Washington communities to be burned in Asia goes against values of care for creation, stewardship, and justice. We cannot sell our greatest assets, harm our poorest brothers and sisters, and imperil the future of our children for the benefit of a few huge coal companies. The moral and spiritual cost of coal export is too high.

In your hands, Commissioner Goldmark, is the choice between investing in clean energy and a stable economy or enabling a dirty and dangerous fuel source that threatens our communities and enriches very few. **We urge you to say no to coal export from Washington ports. Thank you.**

Sincerely,

Optional Field: Title

Required Fields: Name, Congregation, Address, City, State, Zip, Email, Phone