

**From:** [Jordan Van Voast](#)  
**To:** [Commission-Public-Records](#)  
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Good afternoon and thank you Commissioners for hearing my comment. I'd like to address your equity statements in the attachments for this meeting, specifically as it relates to the Port's cruise business, but first, a critical update from our Mother Earth: Earth Day has passed and our future has never been more uncertain. Last week, the [National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration](#) predicted that 2020 will be the warmest year ever. The Southwest is already seeing triple digit temperatures and it's still only April. The oceans are at record high temperatures, even without El Niño and the hurricane and wildfire seasons are right around the corner.

COVID-19 has given us an opportunity to reassess our priorities. We've seen lately that the Earth can heal itself from the burning of fossil fuels if we give it a chance instead of continuing to expand non-essential industries like cruise. We need to radically reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Shelving the T46 project is a step in the right direction, but if one looks beyond short term economic market speculation and adopts a progressive climate based lens, a wise response would see you cancel the T46 cruise expansion project now. I note in your Attachment 7B, "Equity in Port of Seattle COVID-19 Response", some thoughtful words:

*“The Port commits to values of equity, justice and inclusion in the COVID-19 crisis response, from immediate response to longer-term recovery. In developing recovery plans, the Port will ensure that principles of equity, justice, inclusion, transparency, and accountability are embraced. The Port will engage communities who are most impacted to understand their needs. The Port shall consider its fiscal, legal and equity responsibilities in all decisions made when applying these principles. These efforts shall also follow the Port’s principles of supporting regional economic vitality, environmental stewardship, equity and inclusion.”* and these quotes from an NAACP equity manual:

*Recognizing these inequities, crisis response should “...account for the needs of all people. Emergency response and relief practices must benefit everyone while also accounting for the specific needs of vulnerable populations.”*

*“The response cannot just band-aid the immediate damage or put things back to the way they were before...efforts must advance a long term vision for our communities that puts justice at the core.*

I am inspired by reading these statements, but how will you implement them? If one adopts the widest possible equity lens which includes the global impacts of carbon emissions, air pollution, sea level rising, drought, famine and other weather related disturbances, labor abuses in

the cruise industry, harm to marine life including the southern resident orcas on the verge of extinction, there is no justifiable logic for the Port of Seattle to consider expanding its cruise business. A recovery plan that truly considers the principles of equity – not just for human society, but for all life on the planet - would figure out how to shrink cruise, and not put a band aid on it while waiting for the cruise business to recover. Equity asks of us that we look holistically at all living beings and habitats affected by our decisions and make a just transition that not only takes care of workers, but also takes care of our shared world. Equity requires that we acknowledge that the climate emergency and the COVID-19 pandemic have a tragic similarity in that the impacts of these crises are disproportionately felt by marginalized frontline communities.

We need to ask ourselves - what significance is meeting the Port's emissions targets 10 years early when scope 3 emissions are excluded from those targets? Scope 3 encompasses emissions that occur after a cruise ship leaves port, or after a plane takes off and dwarfs those of heating buildings and operating equipment at terminals, by some estimates at least a hundredfold. Who is accounting for Scope 3 at present? Only the planet it seems, and the billions of lives hanging in the balance. This is not equity, and it won't halt the climate emergency.

Now is a time to build a more peaceful and compassionate world that protects nature and people. As the fossil fuel divestment movement has proven, it

makes good financial sense to engage in a just transition away from industries like cruise which create widespread harm with no lasting benefit. Not a single cruise ship is operating at the time of this writing and life goes on. People are in their gardens, or walking and biking on closed streets, breathing cleaner air, smiling at people they would normally never see from inside a car or office building. There are abundant positive alternatives when we think beyond putting things back the way they were before.

The human species is incredibly adaptive. We've been through ice ages, plagues, world wars, 9-11, and now COVID. But the climate emergency is different and demands that we make an unprecedented effort of global cooperation if future generations are to inherit a livable world. We simply cannot afford expanding such a polluting industry as cruise. We all want to get back to normal, except normal was already a crisis.

Please cancel the T46 project. Go deeper with your equity analysis and use your mandate to champion the protection of our world rather than the promotion of unnecessary travel which is destroying it. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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