

Winter Magazine 2021

Washington Wire by Lea McCullough

Governor Inslee Extends Emergency Powers; Shuts Out Legislative Branch

Tracy Ellis, who is the Audio-Video Media Coordinator for the Washington State Senate Republicans, released information Tuesday that is absolutely shocking. **The Department of Labor and Industries has created a new set of rules that could potentially be used by the Governor to extend his vaccine mandate to private businesses.** Rumor has it, Governor Inslee expects to announce in November a blanket vaccine mandate for all Washington businesses over 50 employees. The new rules created by L&I would allow Governor Inslee to do just that.

According to Representative Schoessler: *“L&I created these rules behind closed doors, in the dark, without any of the employer advocates even knowing it was coming ...”* He also said: *“The rules are so vague, that you could just about extend it to anybody under any circumstances.”*

Noted political follower and blogger Ari Hoffman was able to dig up some information on this story. He reported in his work at The Post Millennial that Labor and Industries filed last week what’s called an “emergency package” extending the emergency powers of Governor Inslee.

What do these new rules do?

It grants him, according to elected officials, the power to extend his vaccine mandate to all private businesses. GOP House Reps Jim Walsh of Aberdeen and Jesse Young of Gig Harbor condemned the move by Labor and Industries, calling it a “blank check” for the agency to enforce Inslee’s edicts.

Meanwhile Representative Walsh was locked out of his office in the House Rep Building in Olympia, allegedly for failing to provide proof of having gotten a COVID-19 vaccine.

Many Republican Representatives have asked for a special session to correct and revoke Inslee’s extended emergency powers, to no avail. Representative Padden said, *“I think there’s a real problem when you have supposedly three co-equal branches of government, and the legislature, at least right now, is being frozen out.”*

The Association is tracking this mandate closely as it would have massive impact on all Petroleum Distributors.

Dept. of Ecology says new low-carbon fuel mandate adds nothing to state’s CO2 reduction

-- By Todd Meyers, AWB

Washington state’s newly enacted low-carbon fuel standard (LCFS) does nothing to help meet the state’s CO2 emission targets. Who says so? The Washington State Department of Ecology.

Earlier this year legislators adopted a statewide CO2 policy that requires annual emissions reductions to meet certain targets, a system known as “cap-and-trade.” That system covers transportation-related CO2 emissions – the exact same emissions covered by the LCFS. Both policies do the same thing, but the LCFS is much more expensive.

To confirm this, I asked a question at the Department of Ecology’s first stakeholder meeting to create the rules for the LCFS. I asked *“Is the LCFS on top of the cap-and-trade system or is it covered by the cap-and-trade system?”*

The section manager in charge of developing the LCFS rule responded “*Anything that is reduced by the LCFS would fall under the caps. The cap-and-invest program and the LCFS are essentially working toward the same goals* ”In other words, if the LCFS did not exist, Washington would achieve the exact same CO2 targets.

Although the LCFS adds nothing to statewide CO2 reductions, fuel suppliers are still required to meet it, passing on the high compliance cost to consumers. Currently in California the LCFS costs eight times as much to reduce CO2 emissions as it does under California’s cap-and-trade system.

I also asked about local companies who had already committed to transition their vehicles to 100 percent electric prior to the LCFS. The LCFS creates a system where companies that reduce transportation emissions get to sell credits in a market created by the state. If companies who have already promised to switch to electric vehicles can participate in the market, they are now getting paid for what they already promised they would do. These LCFS credits wouldn’t reduce CO2 emissions.

Ecology’s LCFS manager said they would not be tracking which companies had already made those pledges and they would be allowed to profit by selling credits. Getting paid for what you already promised to do is lucrative, but it undermines the effectiveness of the LCFS and does nothing for the planet.

The state’s new cap-and-trade system has several flaws, but it is far superior to the high cost and ineffectiveness of the LCFS. The truthful answers from Department of Ecology staff confirm how wasteful the LCFS truly is.

Holiday Party Back in Business!

The Association was very pleased to bring back the Holiday Party in 2021! To be together and celebrate togetherness, family and the strength of the industry! The Little Creek Casino in Shelton, WA offered a beautiful backdrop for our Board Meeting and Dinner on December 2nd 2021, with a 6 p.m. Cocktail Hour and a 7 p.m. Dinner.