A SIMPLE SOLUTION TO SHIP POLLUTION: REQUIRE LOW-SULFER FUELS!

THE ISSUE

An increasing number of ships use scrubbers to burn heavy fuel oil (HFO), a cheaper but more polluting fuel that does not meet emissions requirements. Scrubbers remove sulfur and other toxic contaminants from ships' exhaust—but instead of eliminating pollution, 80% of those in use dump it directly into our waters. Scrubber pollution contains heavy metals and other toxic contaminants that threaten water quality, public health, and marine economies.

WHATS AT STAKE?

PEOPLE. SALMON. ORCA. ECONOMY.

- **Toxic accumulation:** Highly acidic sulfur oxides, which contribute to ocean acidification, and other toxic contaminants not only threaten aquatic life but also endanger human health through bioaccumulation in the food chain.
- **Food web disruption:** Southern Resident killer whales depend on Chinook salmon, which need healthy forage fish and zooplankton like copepods.
- **Tribal Treaty rights:** Clean water is vital for Indigenous communities' fishing, culture, and sustenance.
- **Increased pollution:** Ships burning heavy fuel oil with scrubbers release more air pollution than those using low-sulfur fuels.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Large ocean-going ships with scrubbers are polluting Washington's waters—and we have a chance to stop it. HB 1652 and SB 5519 would require ships to use low-sulfur fuels—just like they are already required to do in California. This is the simple, effective solution we need to keep our waters, wildlife, and communities safe. The use of scrubbers is optional—ships can switch to low-sulfur fuels without needing new or modified engines.

Support HB 1652/SB 5519

Reducing environmental impacts associated with the operation of certain ocean-going vessels

Image source: NOAA

Without this legislation, the Southern Residents' critical habitat in WA State waters in the Salish Sea and outer coast will continue to be polluted with the toxic contaminants that further threaten their survival.

Studies show that scrubber pollution harms copepods (animal plankton), vital to the whole food web.

Eelgrass is foundational to coastal ecosystems but sensitive to scrubber discharge contaminants.

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