

Written Remarks for Congresswoman Kim Schrier, M.D. of WA-08:

I appreciate the opportunity to share my priorities on behalf of Washington state's 8th congressional district. I'm proud of all the Community Projects and programmatic appropriations requests I submitted this year. However, with today's time constraints, I will highlight just a few.

As you consider funding for fiscal year 2022 I would like to express my strong support to **improve our nation's recycling system with a specific focus on plastics recycling.** A 2020 study by the EPA found that the current U.S. recycling system faces several challenges, including confusion about what materials can be recycled and recycling infrastructure that has not kept pace with today's diverse and changing waste stream. To help address some of these challenges, **my letter to appropriators asks for more funding for two of the EPA's recycling grant programs. One, the Post-Consumer Materials Management Infrastructure Grant Program** provides federal funding to help strengthen local recycling programs. Local governments serve as the backbone of our nation's recycling system – assuming nearly full responsibility for the cost of residential recycling education, collection, and operation. These funds will provide local governments with resources to build a more resilient U.S. recycling system.

The other is the Trash-Free Waters, Drinking Water Infrastructure, and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Programs. Debris, particularly plastic pollution, is a global crisis. These grant programs provide the needed funds to help keep plastic waste and other post-consumer materials out of landfills and waterways, helping to protect our health, wellbeing, and environment. The need for us to manage our own waste has become especially urgent, since foreign recycling operations no longer accept US plastics.

Strengthening recycling infrastructure and markets for recycled materials within communities across the nation is imperative to increasing the economic and environmental viability of our recycling system.

The next priority I would like to bring to your attention is dedicated funding within the **Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) to continue development of rapid, at-home COVID-19 tests, as well as support for an inter-agency coordinated testing strategy.** Even as vaccines offer a light at the end of the tunnel, we know that COVID-19 continues to circulate and mutate. Without widely available, inexpensive rapid testing this will continue to be a difficult disease to control

Easily accessible tests with a fast result that can be taken at home, school, or in the workplace, without a prescription, can help Americans minimize the risk of infection while allowing our communities to return to sustained normalcy. This is especially important for families with younger children, who do not yet have access to the vaccine. Employing large-scale surveillance use of rapid testing will allow childcare facilities and elementary schools to open safely and stay open, and will allow many parents concerned about safety, particularly mothers, to return to the workforce.

Finally, I'd like to highlight two Community Project Funding submissions. The month of May marks the beginning of "traditional" wildfire season. However, my state has already fought off over 200 fires just this year. If funded, the **Cle Elum Ridge Phase 1 Wildfire Protection Plan** will initiate a series of forest management interventions to help prevent wildfires.

The Washington Department of Natural Resources identified The City of Roslyn, within the Cle Elum Ridge, as one of our state's communities at greatest risk of catastrophic wildfire. In 2017 the Jolly Mountain Fire threatened the City of Roslyn and surrounding communities. The

suppression cost for the Jolly Mountain Fire exceeded \$35 million. Had the proposed forest health work been done, Jolly Mountain would have likely been a “managed fire” with far less threat to communities and firefighters, and reduced suppression costs. Please consider the critical role this project will play in saving lives, ecosystems, property, and taxpayer dollars.

Another project that is critical to my district is the **School-Based Health Clinic at Graham-Kapowsin High School**. This construction will provide a health clinic to support the medical, dental, and behavioral health needs of approximately 3,500 students on campus. The proposed clinic would serve a rural population in my district with limited access to medical services. Ultimately, having this facility on campus will improve underserved students’ physical and mental health, provide immunizations, prevent unintended pregnancies, and improve educational outcomes.

Lastly, I was incredibly excited to see that President Biden’s budget request includes two of my other priorities: first, \$8 million for the Legacy Roads and Trails Program and, second, a proposed extension to the increase in the WIC cash value vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Thank you for your hard work and consideration of these requests.