

To the members of the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council,

Please accept this letter in support of the proposed Horse Heaven Clean Energy Center on behalf of the voting members of the Benton County Democratic Central Committee (BCDCC) approved at our General membership meeting on January 26, 2023.

The Democratic Party has long stood for the creation of clean and renewable energy sources. Here in Eastern Washington, we have a strong history of clean energy production such as our hydropower dams and the Energy Northwest nuclear plant. Across the state, we have already seen a spike in extreme weather events, including heat, drought, excessive rains, and horrific wildfires. The Horse Heaven Clean Energy Center's hybrid combination of wind, solar, and battery storage will aid in achieving our state's ambitious climate agenda, curbing the impacts of climate change, reducing carbon emissions, and reaching the region's clean energy goals.

The Democratic Party has also long stood in support of union labor, prioritizing the creation of local jobs by awarding projects to organized labor with contracts that pay prevailing wages. We are pleased that a Memorandum of Understanding for the Horse Heaven Clean Energy Center was reached between Scout Clean Energy and our local Tri-Cities union crafts who would be responsible for building this project and putting local people to work. This will also ensure that high quality products needed for the project are reliable, safe, and delivered on schedule.

According to extensive economic impact studies, the Horse Heaven Clean Energy Center is poised to generate nearly \$20 million in revenue during the first full year of operation and \$260 million over the 35-year operating life of the project. That kind of revenue could be used to help fund our school systems, hospitals, and emergency public services such as fire and police. Additionally, it would create as many as 930 jobs for skilled construction workers that will be filled by our friends, family, and neighbors. At full build-out, the project could amount to at least \$73 million in labor income and \$143 million in total economic output.

While we recognize the importance of considering the impacts and trade-offs in developing new infrastructure projects such as these, we cannot ignore the massive potential benefits our

community stands to gain. A diverse portfolio of energy solutions including wind and solar power will not only aid us in achieving energy independence, but also help us meet the urgent need for clean energy. We highly encourage this council to weigh the significant contributions this generational economic opportunity will provide.