

Partial transcript of the April 13, 2015 Whatcom County Charter Review Commission meeting, Beginning at approximately [12:41](#) on the recording (recording can be found at <http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/1651/Agendas-Minutes-and-Audio>):

Commission Chair Ben Elenbaas: Any of you, any of our regular attenders here at the Charter Review know that I have never kept the clock. I just let 'er run. I'm keepin' the clock [tonight](#). I'm gonna make a request. As the chairman, I get to do that, I guess. Is Matt Petryni in the house?

Female voice: He's outside the door

Ben Elenbaas: Could somebody bring him in for me?

Ben Elenbaas: Hi Matt. I...I...it's my understanding that you have a burning issue for the commission...

Matt Petryni: Yes, I do.

Ben Elenbaas: I would like to give you an opportunity to address us first.

Matt Petryni: So I, I don't have all the - like a statement prepared or anything, which is my normal practice, but, my name is Matt Petryni. I am the Clean Energy Program Manager for RE Sources for Sustainable Communities. We are an environmental non-profit organization here in Bellingham. And, we represent over ten thousand members in Whatcom County and I'm submitting comments on their behalf. I'm speaking in opposition to the proposed District-Only Voting proposal at least as it's currently conceived. The reason we're concerned about this proposal is because it would create a disproportionate representation scheme in our county and make it possible for a minority of the voting public to achieve a majority on our local government. We're concerned that this proposal is supported by the coal industry, and has been created by their strategists as a strategy to make sure that they have a pro-coal majority on the Whatcom County Council which makes the decision over whether or not to build North America's largest coal export terminal here Whatcom County, at Cherry Point. So, we are opposed to that proposal and as a result, are very concerned that the commission would consider such a proposal to basically move to (indistinguishable word) a disproportionate representation scheme. So that's kind of the issue, and there's, there's some options out there that might make this a little bit more reasonable, and we hope you'll look at those and take those under serious consideration, move those forward to the voters as well to be considered. So, that's kind of where we're at. If we, if the commission isn't willing to reconsider this, we'll definitely have to take our case directly to the voters and talk to them about why this isn't a fair way to conduct elections as a community. So, that's pretty much where I stand. Thank you for allowing me the time to speak.