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The Campaign for Fossil Free Buildings in Silicon Valley

350 Silicon Valley, Acterra, Bay Area for Clean Environment, Carbon Free Silicon Valley, Carbon Free Palo Alto, Carbon Free Mountain View, Citizens' Climate Lobby San Mateo County, Citizens Environmental Council of Burlingame, Clean Coalition, Climate Reality Project: Santa Clara County, Coltura, Cool Block, Earthy B, emeraldECO, Fossil Free Mid-Peninsula, GreenTown, Indivisible Ross Valley, Joint Venture Silicon Valley, Los Altos, Kitchens of Life, Menlo Spark, Menlo Together, Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley, Pacifica Climate Committee, Peninsula Interfaith Climate Action, Project Green Home, Redwood Energy, SIDCO Homes, San Carlos Green, San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility, Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, Sustainable San Mateo County, Sustainable Silicon Valley, Sunnyvale Cool, Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action, and Silicon Valley Youth Climate Strike.

January 24, 2021

California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street, MS-14
Sacramento, California 95814
docket # 19-BSTD-06
docket@energy.ca.gov

RE: Support for Reach Codes in Campbell, Millbrae, Sunnyvale, and Los Altos

Dear California Energy Commissioners,

On behalf of the Campaign for Fossil Free Buildings in Silicon Valley ("FFBSV"), this letter expresses our strong support for the proposed *Local Ordinance Applications* that will be considered tomorrow, January 25th. We appreciate the significant outreach and thoughtful debate that occurred in each of the cities with local ordinances seeking your approval. We urge you to approve each clean energy "Reach Code" local ordinance for Campbell, Millbrae, Sunnyvale, and Los Altos.

FFBSV is comprised of 34 organizations working together to support an accelerated phase out of fossil fuels in buildings (please find more information at www.FossilFreeBuildings.org). A swift transition away from fossil fuel use is necessary to avoid the very worst and irreversible impacts of climate change. Preventing the use of fossil fuels, including natural gas, in new construction will create more affordable, cleaner, healthier, and more resilient housing and buildings for communities throughout California.

As many California cities and counties (41 in total as of today) adopt policies that avoid Fossil Gas in new construction, they are benefiting from a parallel trend of grid decarbonization. The cities seeking your approval for local ordinances favoring all-electric construction are already served with carbon free electricity. The rest of the state will catch up with carbon free power by 2045, making these policies a smart step for all cities in California.

Cities and counties are recognizing how important going fossil-free is to community health, safety, and a stable climate future. Reach Codes offer many advantages with all-electric construction, including:

- All-electric homes are **less expensive** to build (saving at least \$10,000 or more for a single-family home).
- All-electric buildings are **healthier and safer** for occupants. Gas is a leading cause of structure fires, burns, and carbon monoxide poisoning. And gas cooktops contribute to indoor air pollution. Cooking with gas releases fine particulate matter, smog-like compounds, and formaldehyde; it is also known to exacerbate asthma.
- All-electric buildings are a highly visible and practical step forward to address the climate crisis, by breaking the cycle of fossil fuel dependency in buildings. **Each new electric home saves up to 4 tons of carbon per year.**
- All-electric buildings are generally **faster to design, permit, and build**. They save design time, the code is easier for building and planning staff to apply, and it is also easier for everyone to understand.
- All-electric code today prevents a complex, costly switch to electricity in the future, since gas prices are expected to rise sharply, and California is planning to eventually end gas distribution. PG&E has asked for a 24% gas rate increase and SoCal Gas, a 42% increase, over the next couple years, and this is just the beginning. **Building all-electric now helps future-proof cities.**

We hope you will move forward to approve all of the local ordinances before you (19-BSTD-06).

Sincerely,

Diane Bailey, Executive Director, Menlo Spark

Carlos Davidson, Pacifica Climate Committee

Connie Miller, GreenTown Los Altos

Sven Thesen, Founder ProjectGreenHome.org

Dr. Kathleen Kramer, MD, Living carbon free since 2011.

Justine Burt, Co-Chair Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, Green Sanctuary

Terry Nagel, Chair, & Board of Sustainable San Mateo County

Suzanne Emerson, San Carlos Green

Janelle London, Joint Venture Silicon Valley

Bill Hilton, UU Church of Palo Alto Green Sanctuary Committee

Leane Eberhart, San Mateo Architect

Bruce Hodge, Carbon Free Palo Alto

Susan Butler-Graham, Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley Chapter