

DOCKETED	
Docket Number:	19-BSTD-03
Project Title:	2022 Energy Code Pre-Rulemaking
TN #:	237333
Document Title:	Rob Koslowsky Comments - Do Not Ban Natural Gas in Schools
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	Rob Koslowsky
Submitter Role:	Public
Submission Date:	3/29/2021 10:38:26 AM
Docketed Date:	3/29/2021

Comment Received From: Rob Koslowsky
Submitted On: 3/29/2021
Docket Number: 19-BSTD-03

Do Not Ban Natural Gas in Schools

To Whom It May Concern:

For Docket #: 19-BSTD-03 Project Title: 2022 Energy Code Pre-Rulemaking

Please do not ban natural gas in residential construction, including the building of new schools. The attached PDF submission reflects some of the reasons to forestall such a ban “ Against AB33_Koslowsky_March 2021.

Also, please repeal the all-electric mandate for the 2022 Building Code.

Thank you for your consideration,
“Rob

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

Natural Gas and the Proposed AB-33

“It’s a fallacy within our governmental system that we’re going to make sure anytime someone builds something, they give the community something: Developers who develop a subdivision build a new park, donate it to the city or the county. Then it became inclusion of below-market houses or apartments. That’s when the funnel got shut off in people building stuff. “I gotta pay \$60,000 to \$100,000 every time I permit a new house, and if I’m going to build 30 of them and you want me to give you five of them below market, I can’t make that on the margins. So I’m just gonna say no, and not build it.”

- Jeff Schween, Compass Real Estate, May 2019

I had not seen anything about AB-33 until one of my readers highlighted it.

It seems like this proposed assembly bill offered to the California state legislature by Phil Ting [1] is incrementalism run amok.

What is AB-33?

It states, “On or after January 1, 2022, the Department of General Services shall not approve or provide funding for the construction of a new school building that has natural gas connections.”

The infographic features the FMPA Municipal Power logo at the top left, which includes a map of Florida. To the right, a blue-bordered box lists the benefits of 'Natural Gas + Utility-Scale Solar': 'Lowest cost', 'Reliable electric supply', 'Cleaner burning (with Renewable Natural Gas)', and '→ Resiliency + affordable housing'. Below this, the section 'Our Mission' is divided into three columns: 'LOW-COST POWER' with a lightbulb icon and the text 'Customers Need It'; 'RELIABLE POWER' with a battery icon and the text 'Customers Expect It'; and 'CLEAN POWER' with a solar panel icon and the text 'Customers Want It'. At the bottom, a yellow-bordered box states 'Good Public Policy:' followed by three bullet points: '+ Utility-scale solar; *not* rooftop solar', '+ Resiliency with fuel diversity', and '+ Low-cost and reliable power supplies'. A small note at the bottom right reads 'Images courtesy FMPA. Graphic courtesy RKK'.

Natural gas ensures resiliency as well as low cost and reliable electric generation for schools as well as homes – the Florida example

First, homeowners were targeted with all-electric reach codes, where I've highlighted the associated loss of resiliency and performance. Most homeowners don't understand what these over-reach, reach-in-your-pocket codes, will cost them. Besides, there are better alternatives to reducing carbon dioxide emissions than penalizing homeowners and now school board officials.

Soon, it appears, California State politicians seek to incrementally ban natural gas within each public sector, with schools targeted as the first segment. Public school districts don't understand what this will cost them either. Rising costs and declining public school enrollment are already forcing school closures [2]. Adding another new construction "tax" won't help.

The building industry is being forced into compliance with new reach codes and constantly changing rules that don't make financial sense for those occupying the structures. And these particular rule changes certainly won't achieve greenhouse gas reductions. Case in point: During both 2019 and 2020, *GHG reductions* were recorded in California and across the U.S. as a whole, even without these targeted reach codes [3].

Added Complexities and Costs for Everyone

Will developers and builders be responsible to increase the electrical capacity of the street(s) wherever a new school building is to be built? Will they have to augment existing wiring drops? Will replacement transformers be required to feed the school and residential area it's situated in? By integrating new and more expensive electric panels, and more, how does this affect both increasing property tax rates and electric rates to pay for activist-based policies?

Furthermore, a resilient energy system requires natural gas back-up more so than costlier solar + battery backup, for example, to ensure safety and security during long electric outages resulting from PSPSs and electric grid failures. Will students one day have to experience "lights out" days as well as snow days?

Hydroelectric, geothermal, and natural gas power plants are required to cover for the intermittency of wind and solar to avoid brownouts, rotating blackouts, and electric grid failures (due to an aging infrastructure) whenever the CAISO system is stressed (high temperature days, red flag days, winds calm, sun sets, etc.).

No Reimbursement Coming from the State for Its Mandate Either

California's Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

However, government leaders such as Assemblyman Ting claim that this bill, banning natural gas in new school construction, would not require reimbursement for this mandate. This decree in support of a flawed mandate is not only wrong, but

further drives up the cost of school construction [4], while compelling higher property taxes, rising electric rates, and forcing less resiliency on school campuses.

It seems that 2021 will see the accommodation of activists compelling unelected commission-based decisions instead of logical ones rooted in putting residents first by ensuring lower-cost energy and an available and resilient supply of electricity.

“To top it off, Perseverance will test technologies for converting atmospheric carbon dioxide into oxygen that could help sustain human life on Mars. That day may not be so far off. NASA hopes to send astronauts to Mars in the 2030s.”

- Editorial, *The Press Democrat*, February 18, 2021, p.A6

“FMPA generates most of its electricity using natural gas. These baseload power generators have exceeded both national and industry averages for availability and emissions for the past 11 years. During 2020, FMPA’s fleet was available 92% of the time or more than 337 days. The industry average for similar units is 85%. Units like these must be taken out of service at least part of the year for maintenance, so this performance is about as good as it gets.”

- Jacob Williams, GM and CEO, Florida Municipal Power Agency, January 13, 2021

[1] Assemblyman Phil Ting also authored AB3182, related to “Housing Supply,” which prevents homeowners associations from completely banning rental units (including Accessory Dwelling Units). It just went into effect in 2021.

[2] [Board votes to consolidate El Molino and Analy high schools in west Sonoma County](#), Kaylee Tornay, *The Press Democrat*, March 11, 2021:

This school district has experienced a 20 percent decline over the last decade: “All students at El Molino High School in Forestville will move to Sebastopol’s Analy High in the fall under a highly controversial and split decision made by the West Sonoma County Union High School District school board late Wednesday to consolidate the campuses following the failure of two tax measures that would have shored up the district’s yawning budget gap.”

[RKK: Forcing higher building costs on new schools thru incremental legislation such as AB33 will forestall their construction, unless taxpayers can fork over more of their hard-earned income to indulge the whims of political activists. In Sonoma County, residents are saying, “No!”]

[3] Building decarbonization edicts are a solution looking for a problem. If targeting homeowners is supposed to solve the world’s greenhouse gas problem, why is it that during 2019, carbon dioxide emissions did not increase at all? According to the latest data from the International Energy Agency (IEA), *global* carbon dioxide emissions were unchanged at 33 gigatonnes in 2019 vs. 2018, even as the world economy expanded by 2.9%. In fact, “the U.S. recorded the largest emissions decline on a country basis, with a decrease of 140 million tonnes, or 2.9%.”

https://solarindustrymag.com/iea-emissions-from-energy-production-finally-stopped-growing?utm_medium=email&utm_source=LNH+02-13-2020&utm_campaign=SI+Latest+News+Headlines

[4] Targeted solar mandates for existing public schools are driving up the costs of running and operating our children’s places of learning as well. The CEC is pushing school districts into taking loans for mandated solar systems, a cost that should not be applied outside of utility-scale solar projects:

<u>Spend (\$\$\$)</u>	to	<u>Save annually (\$)*</u>	
(for solar projects identified, January 2021)			
\$257,600		\$23,191	School
\$125,600		\$9,371	School (remove propane)
\$437,343		\$25,984	School
\$1,974,850		\$105,522	School
\$792,353		\$60,693	School (provide shade)
\$599,427		\$30,583	School (provide shade)
\$2,473,151		\$140,082	School (provide shade)
\$1,465,747		\$115,559	School (provide shade)
\$2,987,865		\$171,563	School (carport solar)
\$238,028		\$19,371	School
\$610,822		\$71,408	School
<u>\$2,981,800</u>		<u>\$215,339</u>	School (carport solar)
\$14,944,586		\$988,666	Sub-total
plus Non-solar (energy efficiency) projects:			
<u>\$1,712,180</u>		<u>\$134,745</u>	School
\$16,656,766		\$1,123,411	TOTAL

* These savings will be eroded by less credits from a decreasing NEM rebate and further lowered by the attendant costs to operate, maintenance, and repair, as well as reduced for ongoing replacement component costs plus the costs of adding resources to manage the system as well as the higher cost of electricity. Consequently, the savings will erode significantly over the next couple of years. This information was not provided to the public. *Source: California Energy Commission Business Meeting Agenda, planned for January 25, 2021, Item 6. Energy Conservation Assistance Act-Education Subaccount (ECAA-Ed) Competitive Loan Program – PON-19-101.*