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Testimony to CEC, May 24, 2021; Building Electrification

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

Statement of Dr. Robert Gould (PSR), California Energy Commission, May 24, 2021

I'm Dr. Robert Gould. After working as a Pathologist for over 30 since 2012, I've been an Associate Adjunct Professor at UCSF School of Medicine, working in our Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment. I've been on the National Board of Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), since 1993, serving twice as President in 2003 and 2014.

Since 1989 I've also been President of San Francisco Bay PSR, for which I'm speaking today, representing hundreds of health professionals, who speak for the health of our patients and communities, who are increasingly impacted by the unfolding public and environmental health impacts of global warming, and clearly connected issues of air pollution. Because of this we support rapid electrification of our infrastructure provided by renewable and sustainable, non-nuclear sources, as replacement for natural gas, in support of climate, respiratory and cardiovascular health.

As such, we urge that the CEC should immediately move towards all-electric buildings in the 2022 code cycle, a recommendation consistent with positions of the California Air Resources Board and Bay Area Air Quality Management District, because all-electric buildings are cheaper to build and operate, are better for public health, and a critical pathway to protect us from our climate crisis.

We know that the combustion of gas inside our homes produces harmful indoor air pollutants, specifically nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitric oxide, formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, and ultrafine particles. In 2016, the EPA concluded that short-term exposure to nitrogen dioxide has a causal relationship to respiratory effects, including the development or exacerbation of asthma.

We also know that African-American and Hispanic children with asthma are disproportionately burdened by indoor air pollution from gas stoves, as they are more likely living in housing with smaller unit size and greater occupant density, and often inadequate stovetop ventilation that contribute to elevated concentrations of NO₂ in lower-income, multifamily buildings. And of course, we need to consider the disproportionate impacts of outdoor air pollution suffered by these same multi-burdened communities.

Underscoring this, a 2013 meta-analysis found that children in homes with gas stoves have a 42% increased risk of experiencing asthma symptoms (current asthma), a 24% increased risk of ever being diagnosed with asthma by a doctor (lifetime asthma), and an overall 32% increased risk of both current and lifetime asthma. Reinforcing this, a 2018 study published in the *Medical Journal of Australia* indicated that for 12.3% of asthma sufferers aged 14 or younger in Australia, the condition was triggered or worsened by exposure to gas stoves.

In conclusion, SF Bay PSR urges you to use this critical opportunity demonstrate Energy Commission leadership and commitment to rapidly the pollution-free buildings we need now for the optimal public, environmental and climate health we and future generations so deserve.