

DOCKETED

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35 California Elected Officials Support All Electric Building Code by 2022

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

August 10th, 2020

California Energy Commission
Docket Office, MS-4
Re: Docket No. 19-BSTD-03
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
docket@energy.ca.gov

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the undersigned elected officials, we thank you for the opportunity to comment on the California Energy Commission's (CEC) 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards. **We strongly urge the CEC to transition towards a building code that is aligned with the state's climate targets by stopping the expansion of gas infrastructure and adopting an all-electric building code for both residential and commercial buildings to utilize the state's increasingly carbon-free electricity resources in 2022.**

As you are aware, California has adopted aggressive greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets, including 40% below 1990 by 2030, and carbon neutrality by 2045. In support of these goals, the state has set in motion sweeping policy initiatives focused on decarbonization of the electricity sector and the transportation sector. For California to meet its climate goals, the state must also address the 26% of statewide GHG emissions¹ that come from California buildings.

Decarbonizing the building sector also provides other benefits for Californians: most specifically cost savings and improved indoor air quality. New all-electric homes can expect a lifecycle savings of \$130 – \$540 per year when compared with gas-fueled new construction.² Furthermore, building electrification also shields ratepayers from the volatile and rising price of gas. Expanding gas infrastructure also adds to construction cost and time, contributing to the housing affordability crisis.

All-electric homes additionally offer health benefits due to the elimination of air pollutants emitted by gas appliances such as carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NOx) including nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), particulate matter (PM), and formaldehyde, which have been linked to various acute and chronic health effects, including respiratory

¹ Emissions from buildings include fuel combustion, methane, refrigerants, and onsite electricity generation.

² Residential Building Electrification in California. Energy and Environmental Economics (2019).

illness, cardiovascular disease, and premature death.³ The risks of these air pollutants are most acute for apartments, due to a smaller residence size, which puts low-income communities at higher risk.

What's more, with a third of California's 2045 buildings stock being built in the next 25 years, building industry stakeholders (i.e. manufacturers, architects, real estate agents, builders and contractors) urgently need a clear signal from the state to move towards all-electric construction.

So far, 31 communities have already adopted reach codes and local ordinances that prioritize or require all-electric new construction, piloting effective policies that act as a road map for communities across California and regulatory leaders like the CEC. As other cities and counties across California file their reach codes and commit to the state's climate goals, the patchwork of clean energy building codes across the state will only make it more complicated for building stakeholders to navigate.

As elected officials, we are committed to help solve climate change by lowering California's GHGs, making housing more affordable in our communities, and protecting the health of our residents. Newly constructed buildings will be in use for decades and continuing to connect new buildings to gas makes it much harder and costlier to convert them to clean electricity later. For all the reasons mentioned above, we strongly believe all-electric new construction is a no-regrets strategy that will help our goals. Therefore, we urge the CEC to move as quickly as possible and adopt an all-electric code in 2022. We look forward to collaborating with the CEC and other interested stakeholders through the building code development process.

Sincerely,

James Kyriaco
City Councilmember
Goleta

Paula Perotte
Mayor
Goleta

James Kyriaco

³ Effects of Residential Gas Appliances on Indoor and Outdoor Air Quality and Public Health in California. UCLA Fielding School of Public Health (2020).

City Councilmember
Goleta

Stuart Kasdin
City Councilmember
Goleta

Kyle Richards
City Councilmember
Goleta

John Bauters
City Councilmember
Emeryville

Dianne Martinez
City Councilmember
Emeryville

Rochelle Nason
City Councilmember
Albany

Gabriel Quinto
City Councilmember
El Cerrito

Kate Harrison
City Councilmember
Berkeley

Dan Kalb
District 1 City Councilmember
Oakland

Shawn Kumagai
City Councilmember
Dublin
Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft

Mayor
Alameda

Ben Bartlett
City Councilmember
Berkeley

Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto
Cit Councilmember
El Cerrito

Christian Patz
Mayor
Emeryville

Victor Aguilar
City Councilmember
San Leandro

Alison Hicks
City Council Member
Mountain View

Margaret Abe-Koga
Mayor
Mountain View

Mark West
City Councilmember
Imperial Beach

Lisa Matichak
City Councilmember
City of Mountain View

Francisco Zermeño
City Councilman
Hayward

Al Mendall
City Councilmember
Hayward

Meagan Harmon
City Councilwoman
Santa Barbara

D'Lynda Fischer
Vice Mayor
Petaluma

John F. Johston
Mayor
Ojai

Jon Wizard
City Council Member
Seaside

Sara Lamnin
City Councilmember
Hayward

Ed Hernandez
City Councilmember
San Leandro

Justin Cummings
Mayor
Santa Cruz

Das Williams
Santa Barbara County First District Supervisor
Santa Barbara

Linda Parks

County Supervisor
Thousand Oaks

John f. Johnston
Mayor
Ojai

Suza Francina
City Councilmember
Ojai

Kevin McKeown
Mayor
Santa Monica

Alex Fisch
City CouncilMember
Culver City