

DOCKETED

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Mothers Out Front - Please do it for the children

Attached is the full position paper from Mother's Out Front. -DeAnna

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

MOTHERS OUT FRONT'S PUBLIC COMMENT
AT THE CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION'S WORKSHOP ON BUILDING ELECTRIFICATION
October 6, 2020

Good afternoon, Commissioners.

My name is DeAnna Pursai, and I am a volunteer with Mothers Out Front. I live in San José, California, and I'm the mother of two teenagers whose future I am gravely concerned about.

On behalf of Mothers Out Front, a growing grassroots movement of 35,000 mothers and others mobilizing for a livable climate for all children, I thank you for hosting this very important meeting.

We strongly urge you to adopt an all-electric building code starting in 2022. There is simply no good reason to continue to build with outdated, dangerous, and climate-destabilizing fossil gas when all-electric buildings are safer, healthier, more cost-effective and climate-protective. Only gas companies and gas utilities benefit from the continued use of fossil gas to power our buildings. We hope that you will listen to the scientists, the doctors and nurses--and the mothers--and move forward to require that all new construction in CA be all-electric as of 2022.

It's not sufficient to merely encourage, or incentivize, that new construction be all-electric. Without an outright mandate, incentives are unlikely to result in any significant shift of new construction practices toward zero-carbon electric construction. This risks the construction of hundreds of thousands more new buildings with gas hook-ups and the infrastructure to power them, locking us into decades of climate pollution and indoor pollution. **We simply cannot afford, for a livable planet, for our health and safety, and for housing affordability in California, to build 300,000+ new homes and millions of square feet of commercial space fueled by gas for another 3 years.** [34 local CA jurisdictions](#) have already adopted local codes that require or strongly encourage electric new construction. **It is time for the state to follow suit--and to blaze the trail for other states.**

There are 4 main reasons we urge you to mandate that all new construction in CA be all-electric:

First, this will protect public health, particularly that of children and vulnerable communities. Just last week, you heard powerful testimony about the damaging health impacts of gas stove pollution. As mothers, we are especially alarmed by the fact that children growing up in homes with gas stoves are 42% more likely to experience symptoms of asthma.⁽¹⁾ We are deeply concerned that low-income communities and communities of color may be at higher risk of health impacts from indoor gas pollution, due to higher asthma rates and building conditions that can result in higher nitrogen dioxide concentrations. And we are alarmed by the fact that indoor air can be so contaminated that the same air, if found outdoors, would exceed legal limits. The current public health crisis only heightens the urgency to take bold and effective steps to reduce indoor air pollution, by electrifying appliances rather than burning dirty gas.

Second, building all-electric buildings protects public safety. Gas is a leading cause of structure fires, burns, and carbon monoxide poisoning. After earthquakes, about one in four fires is caused

by leaking gas.^[2] Given California’s propensity for earthquakes, we should protect public health by discontinuing the build-out of gas.

Third, decarbonizing our buildings helps to protect the climate, by reducing the leakage and burning of methane, one of the most potent climate-destabilizing gases. 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.^[3] In some regions of the state, the gas burned in buildings causes approximately 40% of the greenhouse gas emissions, so electrifying its buildings is **one of the most impactful climate policies California can adopt.**^[4] As we approach the five-year anniversary of the Aliso Canyon blow out--the largest release of methane in history--it’s important to remember that methane leaks at every stage--from extraction to storage to transport to burning. If we stop powering our buildings with gas, we won’t have any more Aliso Canyon blow outs.

Finally, all-electric homes are less expensive to build (with a net savings of around \$10,000 for a single-family home and \$3000 or more for each new apartment unit).^[5] All-electric buildings are generally **faster to design, permit, and build.** And all-electric buildings will be less expensive to power as well. SoCalGas requested from the CPUC a cumulative rate increase for “natural” gas of 39.2% between 2019-2022, and PG&E is requesting similar increases. Building all-electric now helps **future-proof residents** from stranded gas assets and their high cost to rate-payers.^[6]

In sum, we urge you to adopt a strong, all-electric building code in 2022 to protect **community health and safety, boost affordability and, most essential of all, preserve a stable climate future.** Doing so will provide more affordable, cleaner, healthier, and more resilient homes and buildings, and protect the most vulnerable Californians.

After all, our children will be living, studying, and working in these buildings for decades. Please do this for them!

Thank you.

REFERENCES

¹ Seals, Brady Anne and Krasner, Andee. *Health Effects from Gas Stove Pollution* (May 2020). https://www.mothersoutfront.org/report_gas_stoves_health

² Earthquake Country Alliance. <https://www.earthquakecountry.org/step1/gassafety>

<https://coeh.ph.ucla.edu/effects-residential-gas-appliances-indoor-and-outdoor-air-quality-and-public-health-california>

³ Peninsula Reach Codes team. *Electrifying New Single-Family Homes in the Bay Area – The Cost Story.* https://peninsulareachcodes.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Electrification-Cost-Story-Infographic_v8.1.pdf

⁴City of Menlo Park Climate Action Plan Update (December 2019).
<https://www.menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/View/23614/SS1-20191210-CC-Climate-Action-Plan-Update-Direction>

⁵Energy and Environmental Economics. *Residential Building Electrification in California: Consumer economics, greenhouse gases and grid impacts* (April, 2019). https://www.ethree.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/E3_Residential_Building_Electrification_in_California_April_2019.pdf

⁶California Public Utilities Commission. (2018, May). Public Participation Hearing: Southern California Gas company General Rate Case (A.17-10-008). [Fact Sheet].
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