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*Comment Received From: Shane Clark
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Public Responsibility for Future Provision

Man-made climate change and its catastrophic consequences are upon us. We've seen record-setting temperatures and carbon dioxide concentrations around the world; devastating wildfires in Australia and here in California, glacier and ice sheet's shedding massive amounts of ice, queues of battering hurricanes all season, and heavy winter precipitation in mountain areas driven by warming oceans. All of these trends are caused by the developed-world's dependence on fossil fuels and the insulating greenhouse gases emitted during combustion.

In the last 100 years, dirty fossil fuels like coal have seen a decrease in their utilization, replaced by nuclear- and natural gas-powered electrical sources across the buildings sector, from homes to industrial settings. Already, 60% of new homes in the US each year are electric-only. Nuclear energy comes with it's own safety and pollution hazards, but natural gas infrastructure contributes far more to the warming trend witnessed as global average surface temperatures continue to rise. As electrical vehicles become the new standard of transportation, demand for electricity will rise while demand for gasoline falls. The same will happen to natural gas as photovoltaic roof coverings and zero-emission homes continue to grow in their percentage of the housing market. I kindly urge the Commission to consider their responsibility to the public's health and safety. The future of humanity requires bold action from those most responsible for the emissions which harm the globe, and the energy sector needs to treat natural gas like the harmful, wasteful, leak-prone fuel source it is, just as we did with coal in the 20th century.

The technology is already available for most new buildings to be electric-only; efficiency and subsequent savings go up as photovoltaic and energy-efficient are added to the building. This crisis is increasingly infringing on human lives around the globe, and the solutions are within grasp. I ask that the 2022 Energy Code require new buildings, commercial and residential, and major renovations to be all-electric, with only select exemptions available for commercial restaurants to install new natural gas hookups. The future depends on the decisions of today, and the Commission can guide Californians' decisions toward a swift resolution to this climate change crisis.

Kindly,
Shane Clark
Climate Researcher and Activist