



January 6, 2022

Contra Costa Board of Supervisors

RE: DRAFT ELECTRIC NEW BUILDING ORDINANCE

Dear Members of the Board,

Thank you for moving forward on the proposed ordinance to ban natural gas in all new residences, and many new nonresidential buildings. We have reviewed the draft ordinance, and only have a couple of comments:

1. The ordinance is silent on new commercial buildings where HVAC and water heating systems are installed prior to occupancy types being identified (where a building is a multiple tenant type, and where a single tenant may have both applicable and exempt space types). On December 13, I spoke to Demian Hardman-Saldana about this, and he assured me – to our organization’s satisfaction – that planning and building department staff will not allow natural gas infrastructure to be installed unless a space is an exempt occupancy type.
2. Solar Thermal Systems. While this proposed ordinance has been characterized as an “electrification” ordinance, its purpose is to stop new buildings from burning fossil fuels. Therefore, solar thermal space heating and water heating systems ought to be allowed (and encouraged). Section III (b) includes a definition for All-Electric Building. The definition’s final line is “An all-electric building may utilize solar thermal pool heating.”

We propose that this line’s wording change to “[An all-electric building may utilize solar thermal space and solar water heating](#)”.

We look forward to working with the County on additional programs to phase out fossil fuels in transportation, and in all buildings – new and existing.

Please feel free to contact me should you need any additional information.

Gary Farber, on behalf of 350 Contra Costa

cc: Demian Hardman-Saldana, Wes Sullens, Clerk of the Board