

9/18/2020

Land Use and Transportation Committee
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Supervisors Peskin, Safai, and Preston,

On behalf of SPUR, I am writing to express support for the proposed ordinance amending the building code mandating all new construction be all-electric (File #200701). This ordinance would require new construction to use only electric power, with a delayed effective date for restaurants and an exception for buildings where it is physically or technically infeasible.

To meet California's climate goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent by 2030 and 80 percent by 2050, the state needs to move expediently to electrify buildings, while decarbonizing the electrical grid. The state is making good progress toward decarbonizing its energy grid, but is falling behind in efforts to electrify buildings. Bay Area Air Quality Management District projected in their 2017 Clean Air Plan that for the region to meet its climate goals, 100 percent of new residential construction needs to be zero net energy by 2020, with new commercial construction following suit by 2030. Clearly the Bay Area has failed to meet its goal of electrifying residential buildings by 2020. We need to act urgently to make up for lost time.

In our report, [Fossil Free Bay Area](#), SPUR identified electrifying buildings as one of nine key strategies for the Bay Area to achieve a zero-carbon future. Thirty-three cities in California have already passed reach codes to reduce buildings' reliance on natural gas. San Francisco is one of those, having banned natural gas appliances in its municipal buildings earlier this year. San Francisco is in position to lead again on this issue by demonstrating that all-electric residential buildings are economically feasible to build and attractive to consumers.

However, given San Francisco's need to address its housing shortfall, the city should carefully monitor the impact of this ordinance to ensure that it does not discourage construction of new housing units. Of particular concern are master-planned projects with a signed Development Agreement and natural gas mains already in place before this ordinance goes into effect. SPUR suggests to explore either grandfathering in certain of the buildings in these projects in to allow construction of mixed-fuel buildings, or to find other ways of helping the developers recover the cost of installing the gas mains. Two projects in San Francisco, Treasure Island and Pier 70, would fit in this special circumstance. SPUR urges the author of the bill to work with the affected parties to address their concerns.

Sincerely,



Laura Feinstein, Ph.D.
Sustainability and Resilience Policy Director