

Molly Wingrove

From: Stults, Missy <MStults@a2gov.org>
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 3:01 PM
To: Rep. Roger Hauck (District 99); Rep. Michele Hoytenga (District 102); Rep. Joseph Bellino, Jr. (District 17); Rep. Matt Hall (District 63); Rep. Mike Mueller (District 51); Rep. Pauline Wendzel (District 79); Rep. Kevin Hertel (District 18); Rep. John N. Damoose (District 107); Rep. TC Clements (District 56); Rep. Pat Outman (District 70); Rep. Jewell Jones (District 11); Rep. Tenisha Yancey (District 1); Rep. Alex Garza (District 12); Rep. Angela Witwer (District 71); Rep. Richard Steenland (District 22)
Cc: Molly Wingrove; Rep. Yousef Rabhi (District 53); Rep. Donna Lasinski (District 52)
Subject: Opposition to House Bill 4575

Dear Honorable Representative Hauck and Honorable Members of the Regulatory Reform Committee -

I'm writing today to register my strong opposition to House Bill 4575. As a mother, a Michigander, and a ardent believer in protecting the public health, safety, and general welfare, I'm deeply concerned about this bill and its short-sightedness.

Just like you, local residents and local leaders want what's best for our communities. And we know how to solve our local problems – because we see them up close every day. A shoreline community knows if it needs different environmental protections than a big city. And a rural town knows if it needs to use its land differently than in the suburbs. But more and more, state politicians are striking down or pre-empting local ideas from advancing when special interests tell them to. Communities end up stuck with one-size fits all rules that don't make sense for them. Our leaders should listen to communities, not corporations. States should provide a foundation – basic protections so everyone is treated fairly. But local communities should be able to build on that foundation based on what we know about our local communities. Because local impact starts with local ideas.

In terms of HB 4575, this bill is in direct opposition to much of the work that Ann Arborites and Southeast Michiganders are demanding. It also sets a dangerous precedence. Given these realities, my opposition to HB 4575 centers on six main points:

- **Health:** Using natural gas appliances in homes has a significant impact on human health (asthma; developing bodies, NOX emissions, poor indoor air quality). Residents of all-electric homes breathe healthier indoor air without toxic combustion gases from gas stoves and furnaces. Avoiding the burning of fossil fuels inside buildings also eliminates toxic combustion exhaust from those buildings, improving outdoor air quality. As further illustration, a recent report found that, in Michigan alone, outdoor air pollution from burning fossil fuels in buildings led to an estimated 841 early deaths and \$9.419 billion in health impact costs in 2017 alone. When residents ask for measures to protect their community's health, local governments must be able to respond.
- **Safety:** Using natural gas appliances in homes is a safety issue (fire, carbon monoxide). As noted above, natural gas literally kills.
- **Cost:** It is already cheaper and faster to build all-electric homes without gas connections in nearly all cases...in Michigan. Furthermore, given how much we must reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, we expect both gas demand and the number of gas customers to reduce significantly over the next 20 years. Any further expansion of the gas delivery system will lead to assets that will no longer be used at their projected capacity before the end of their life, wasting resources and increasing costs for the remaining customers. Local governments have a duty to protect their residents from these economic risks.
- **Equity:** Pretending change isn't coming to the gas system would disproportionately affect under-resourced communities and communities of color, who already pay a larger percentage of their income toward energy costs than other populations. Those communities must be allowed to determine their own clean energy futures before they are left holding the bag on an overbuilt fossil gas system.

- **Jobs:** Replacing fossil fuel equipment with highly efficient electric appliances is labor-intensive work that can create many new, high-quality, family-sustaining jobs. For example, studies have already found that the transition away from gas in buildings will lead to a net job increase in California.
- **Climate Change:** Natural gas consumption emits greenhouse gases/carbon emissions and one of the best routes to reducing carbon from buildings is to electrify all buildings (because electricity can be supplied with renewables).

Finally, given that people spend at least 90% of their time in buildings, it's our responsibility to ensure those buildings are safe, affordable, healthy, and comfortable. The ban on the ban in no way, shape, or form, help us achieve that goal. Why pass a ban that makes sense no sense given current state building codes and that limits our ability to be agile, nimble, and responsive to what our residents demand today and into the future.

With all of that as background, I hope you will reject HB 4575. Thank you,
Missy

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