

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY  
COMMITTEE, Date

LD 2077 An Act Regarding Customer Costs and the Environmental and Health  
Effects of Natural Gas  
-In Opposition-  
January 23, 2024

Good afternoon, Senate Chair Lawrence, House Chair Zeigler and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. My name is Matt Boulerice and I live in Waterville. I am the founder and principle of Boulerice Management LLC, focused on the sourcing and acquisition of distressed single and multi-family properties in Central Maine. In addition, I am the founder and broker New England Realty Group LLC

I directly manage the redevelopment of properties, ensuring the highest quality standards are met on each project. I am committed to assisting in the acquisition or sale of investment Real Estate. I have worked with Summit Natural Gas several times over the last 7-8 years. This partnership has allowed me to significantly improve the condition and efficiency of several dozen housing units throughout Central Maine. I'm committed to improving living conditions and adding distressed housing stock back into the pool of available rentals. Utilizing natural gas and the resources available have greatly improved my ability to do so. I look forward to continuing my partnership with Summit and Natural Gas in general.

From the perspective of this experience, I submit testimony against LD An Act Regarding Customer Costs and the Environmental and Health Effects of Natural Gas.

The natural gas distribution system is the most resilient and reliable form of energy delivery due to its underground delivery features. This bill ignores those reliability benefits and threatens to expose Maine homes and businesses to increased power outages particularly during extreme weather events.

As concerns over emissions from gas ranges are raised and debated, the natural gas industry is focused on bringing objective technical information to the discussion. The gas utility industry, in collaboration with research organizations and appliance manufacturers, continues to develop information and provides education for consumers, employees, fuel suppliers, and regulators about the safety of gas cooking appliances and ways to reduce cooking process emissions from impacting indoor air quality. These groups are heavily engaged in promoting the safe use of natural gas appliances through the development of standards for the design of natural gas appliances, participating in building safety codes and standards proceedings, and federal agency reviews.

According to American Gas Association, the 20-year cost of owning the average home with high-efficiency natural gas equipment would be \$29,772. The 20-year cost of owning an average home with electric equipment would be between \$41,336 and \$44,856 depending on whether the structure would require upgraded service paneling. Therefore, natural gas represents savings of between 39% and 51% versus electricity for the energy needs of an average residential customer.

When equipment costs, installation costs, maintenance costs, and energy costs are annualized, the average home with natural gas would cost its customers an average of \$1,489 per year while the average electrified home would cost between \$2,067 and \$2,243 per year. Hence, natural gas customers would save between \$578 and 754 per year.

In conclusion, In a free-market consumers get to make their own choices. Banning gas will force Mainers to find a substitute – no matter the cost, no matter the alternative. This sort of directive and punitive action will rob consumers of energy choice, and make industrial uses find places besides Maine to locate their facilities.

To take any fuel away from our state without a viable alternative is dangerous and irresponsible. The results of this extreme policy will be devastating to Maine. I urge you to oppose LD2077 An Act Regarding Customer Cost and Environmental and Health Effects of Natural Gas by voting OUGHT NOT TO PASS.

Respectfully submitted by:

Matt Boulerice  
Owner  
Boulerice Management LLC