



March 23, 2021

The Honorable Dave Cortese
Member, California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 3070
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 30 – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED
As Introduced December 7, 2020**

Dear Senator Cortese:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to respectfully express our position of “Oppose Unless Amended” for your Senate Bill 30, concerning building decarbonization. RCRC is an association of thirty-seven rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each member county.

SB 30 prohibits new state buildings from being connected to the natural gas grid, requires the Department of General Services to develop a decarbonization plan for state-owned buildings, and prohibits state agencies from providing funding or other support for projects for the construction of buildings connected to the natural gas grid. RCRC is agnostic about the first two components of the bill, but objects to the third regarding the provision of state funding and support.

RCRC member counties have experienced most of the state’s public safety power shutoff (PSPS) events over the last few years. We do not underestimate the risk of wildfire danger and appreciate the role that expertly-informed, narrowly-tailored PSPS events play in avoiding catastrophic wildfires. At the same time, our communities now have far less reliable electricity than they did just a few years ago. RCRC is concerned that restricting state funding for buildings connected to the natural gas grid could further undermine energy reliability for critical facilities and the residential sector.

Natural gas is often used in residential and commercial buildings (many of which are owned or operated by local governments) for water and space heating, cooking, and clothes drying. When communities lose power during a PSPS event or other outage, they do not necessarily lose the ability to continue operating those systems dependent on natural gas. This can be very important as outages often last for several days at a time

1215 K Street, Suite 1650, Sacramento, CA 95814 | www.rcrcnet.org | 916.447.4806 | Fax: 916.448.3154

The Honorable Dave Cortese
Senate Bill 30
March 23, 2021
Page 2

in many communities. The decreasing reliability of electricity in these communities makes it even more important to preserve their ability to use natural gas for cooking, water heating, and space heating.

The state provides many different types of funding for residential and nonresidential building construction, some of which is federal funding that is awarded to local governments or the private sector by various state entities. Given the state's diverse geography and needs, RCRC cautions against a one-size-fits-all approach to decarbonization that ignores the growing energy reliability problem that exists in many parts of the state.

For these reasons, we regretfully oppose your SB 30 unless amended to remove the proposed Public Resources Code Section 25972. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jkennedy@rcrcnet.org or (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "J" and "K".

JOHN KENNEDY
Legislative Advocate

cc: Members of the Senate Governmental Organization Committee
Felipe Lopez, Chief Consultant, Senate Governmental Organization Committee
Richard Paul, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus