



SAN MATEO, SANTA CLARA & SAN BENITO COUNTIES

April 9, 2021

Senator Mike McGuire, Chair
Senate Governance and Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 408
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 32 (Decarbonization Act of 2021)

Dear Senator McGuire,

We write in support of SB 32 because a just transition to zero-emission buildings is absolutely critical to ensure that California reaches the state's current climate goals. The State Air Resources Board finds that California's building energy use accounts for almost 25 percent of our statewide GHG emissions. In 2016, California's building stock was responsible for directly emitting 37 million tons of greenhouse gases.

Because a third of California's 2045 new building stock will be constructed between now and 2045, decarbonizing newly constructed buildings is key to reaching the state's fossil fuel reduction targets, including going 40% below our 1990 GHG emission levels by 2030, and achieving carbon neutrality by 2045.

In general, all-electric "decarbonized" buildings cost less to build to code than those requiring additional gas infrastructure. They also enhance indoor and outdoor air quality, reduce safety risks associated with gas, and improve public health. Electrifying our building stock also has the added benefit of job creation as it produces a new demand for skilled workers.

Over 50 cities and counties in California have considered policies to support net-zero emission construction, while 39 have already updated their building codes to become GHG-free. However, the state has not yet taken action to ensure all cities and counties in California take similar measures to embrace building decarbonization. Cities, counties, and the state must make a joint effort to decarbonize their building stock if we are to meet the state's ambitious climate goals.

SB 32 would require cities and counties in California to update their General Plans with objectives, targets, and policies to decarbonize newly constructed buildings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue Chow".

Sue Chow

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Lessin".

Susan Lessin

Leadership Team, Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter,
Environmental Legislative Action Committee

Cc: James Eggers, Director, Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter