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State Of WASH,
UTIL. AND TRANSF.
COMMISSION

Greetings,

I am writing in to comment on energy decarbonization impacts and pathways for electric and gas utilities. Currently, our homes and buildings are a growing source of emissions in our state due to the use of fracked gas for heating and other power purposes. It is important for us to address the emissions stemming from fossil fuels in our residential and business buildings, as it accelerates the climate crisis and disproportionately affects the health and well being of BIPOC communities, low-income individuals, children, and the elderly.

Pollution from fossil fuels creates both indoor and outdoor pollution, which negatively impacts both the environment and human health. Using gas stoves can create high levels of nitrogen oxide, leading to increased rates of heart failure and asthma. People of color as well as low income communities are already disproportionately exposed to outdoor pollutants; we must work to decarbonize our buildings and homes to ensure they aren't exposed to even more pollutants indoors. As 27% of our climate pollution comes from our homes and buildings, it is only practical that we take time and effort to decarbonize this sector. Since Washington has an abundance of low-cost, low-carbon energy, it is imperative we work quickly to transition our existing home heating and power system to clean energy as well as ensure any new buildings are run using renewable energy.

Renewable natural gas is still bad for the environment and should not be used as an alternative to other fossil fuels, as it is often taken from landfills and dairy farms that cause water and air pollution. Furthermore, RNG costs more to produce and those costs would be passed off to the consumer. The Department of Commerce also reported that only 3-5% of WA's fracked gas could be replaced by RNG. RNG should not be considered as an option when cleaner, more affordable options such as solar, wind, and hydropower are already available.

Not only is switching to renewable, decarbonized energy sources good for our planet, but it will also improve the health of our communities. Washington has the opportunity to transition to an even cleaner energy grid, by increasing access to clean energy appliances and heating options as well as making these options accessible to all. This will create a number of clean energy jobs for our workforce, improve the health and wellness of our communities, especially those who are already marginalized, and ensure we act to address our climate crisis.

Thank you.