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Testimony Supporting
HB 201 – Prevents local governments from limiting use of natural gas

before the

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee

by

John Anghilante

AU Fireplace Group, Inc.

May 25, 2021

To: Committee Chairman Rob McColley and Members of the Committee

My name is John Anghilante with AU Fireplace Group, Inc. My company owns two fireplace retail stores in the state of Ohio: The Hearth Shop in Westlake, OH and Fireplace n' Fixin's in Martins Ferry, OH. We have been providing customers with efficient gas heating fireplaces since 1952. Our locations sell a full selection of both indoor and outdoor gas heating and cooking appliances. AU Fireplace Group works in and supports 12 different counties around Ohio. We employ on average 20 full time employees and partner with dozens of independent contractors on heating projects. As a supplier of efficient gas heating fireplaces to the residents of Ohio, I urge you to vote YES on HB 201.

Voting Yes will help retailers, such as ourselves, to remain open and profitable, which will in turn help our local communities. Eliminating the gas portion of our business would severely limit the number of products we would be able to sell, hindering our ability to stay in business. This would not only affect the 20+ people we employ, but would have a snowball effect eliminating hundreds of jobs through our supply chains and independent contractors that we work with.

Voting Yes will allow us Ohioans to have a choice on how to properly heat and protect our families. Gas fireplaces are a reliable source of secondary heat. This gives many residents peace of mind knowing that if the electricity were to go out, there are alternative ways to keep our families warm and safe during the cold winter months.

Voting Yes will also allow us Ohioans to have a choice on the most cost-effective way to heat our individual homes. Because of our longevity in the heating fireplace industry AU Fireplace Group has worked with all different types of fuel sources. We understand that each home and person's needs are different, and we feel strongly that having a mixture of efficient energy sources is the best way to support individual economic needs.

Please Vote YES on HB 201 and show your support for the health and safety of our jobs, our families, and our communities.