



To: Members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee

From: Vince Squillace, Executive Vice President OHBA Testimony

Date: May 25, 2021

Re: *Proponent Testimony HB 201*

Chairman McColley, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams, and Members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide proponent testimony for HB 201 on behalf of the Ohio Home Builders Association. With all due respect, we do not feel the transmission and use of a particular fuel is an issue of municipal concern. In all likelihood, the vast majority of homes in Ohio have furnaces and water heaters which use natural gas or propane as the power source.

Builders across Ohio all agree most consumers choose natural gas to power furnaces and water heaters. I am not aware of any builders who offer only electric as the main power source.

I would like to share some interesting history with gas moratoria in Ohio. For a number of years new gas taps were prohibited in the late 70's and early 80's due to a major under preparedness by a large gas utility to meet heating needs due to severe weather. The governor asked for prayers, as during a stretch of near zero temperatures furnaces may not have been able to provide heat through the night.

Such an event was justification for the PUCO to impose the moratoria.

As a result of the moratoria, homes constructed for a period of years were forced to use electric. Many problems were faced by those all-electric homes, and when the moratoria was lifted just about all converted to gas once the gas mains were lain.

The legislature enacted new mandates requiring gas utilities properly prepare for unforeseen weather conditions and assure adequate supply of gas. Much has

changed through the years with energy use and equipment. Natural gas remains the choice of most consumers.

The same concerns would apply to home improvement. If a ban is enacted, hundreds of homeowners will be faced with having to convert existing gas and propane appliances to electric, an expensive venture, indeed. Homes last for decades. Furnaces and water heaters require replacement and maintenance.

With electrification comes costs. New furnaces typically require a heat pump. Heat pumps are most efficient in a mild climate. Most of Ohio is not in a mild climate. As temperature drop, so does a heat pumps efficiency and total electric use rises.

I've attached a workup of costs associated with electrification in new home construction. As you can see, it is expensive.

We understand the current debate regarding the use of fossil fuels. If a major adjustment is deemed necessary, it will come from the federal government not from a few municipalities.

Thanks for your time and opportunity to provide comments on HB 201.