

9/16/2024

RESOLUTION NO. M-\_\_\_\_\_

A RESOLUTION expressing a collective position of the Vancouver City Council in opposition to Washington State Initiative No. 2066 which concerns regulating energy services, including natural gas and electrification, and which, if passed, would repeal or prohibit certain laws and regulations that discourage natural gas use, and/or promote electrification, and require certain utilities and local governments to provide natural gas to eligible customers.

WHEREAS, the City of Vancouver is committed to ensuring a livable future for its residents and visitors by reducing our contributions to climate change, with a goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2040; and

WHEREAS the City of Vancouver is committed to advancing equity, and the City recognizes that ‘climate justice’ is interconnected with racial justice – with many historically marginalized members of our community experiencing disproportionate impacts of climate change based on the physical attributes of the neighborhoods in which they live; and

WHEREAS, the City of Vancouver is focused on protecting our community from the impacts of climate change, including unnaturally poor air quality, increased incidents of childhood asthma, extreme weather, wildfires, and threats to public health and ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, legal precedent has recognized that there is “little basis for denying that climate change is occurring at an increasingly rapid pace” and that “[c]opious expert evidence establishes that this unprecedented rise stems from fossil fuel combustion and will wreak havoc on the Earth's climate if unchecked.” *Juliana v. United States*, 947 F.3d 1159, 1166 (9th Cir. 2020); and

WHEREAS, the City's efforts to ensure a livable future have been supported by substantial state grant awards including over \$4.95 million in funds from the Washington State 3-cent gas tax and over \$4.85 million in funds from the WA Climate Commitment Act; and

WHEREAS, the factors that contribute to climate change extend far beyond Vancouver's boundaries and Washington State Initiative No. 2066, if passed, would prohibit statewide laws and policies that support, augment, and are in alignment with, the goals and objectives of the City of Vancouver's Climate Action Framework; and

WHEREAS, Washington State Initiative No. 2066, if passed, would preempt the City of Vancouver's home rule authority by preventing the City from enacting policies to disincentivize the use of natural gas within the City's jurisdictional boundaries; and

WHEREAS, Washington State Initiative No. 2066, if passed, stands to jeopardize the City's ability to receive funds attributed to switching from natural gas to electric service and interrupt municipal work that could be carried out using these funds; and

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2024, following notice and publication in accordance with Washington law, the City of Vancouver held a public hearing and allowed approximately equal amounts of time for those wishing to speak in favor of, and opposition to, the proposed ballot initiative.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER:

Section 1. The City Council hereby expresses a collective position in opposition to Washington State Initiative No. 2066 because, if passed, this initiative (a) undermines statewide

efforts that support, augment, and are in alignment with, the City of Vancouver’s Climate Action Framework; (b) would preempt the City’s home rule authority to pass local laws disincentivizing use of natural gas; and (c) stands to jeopardize the City’s ability to receive funds attributed to switching from natural gas to electric service and interrupt municipal work that could be carried out using these funds.

ADOPTED at a Regular Meeting of the Vancouver City Council this 16th day of September, 2024.

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Anne McEnery-Ogle, Mayor

Attest:

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Natasha Ramras, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

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Jonathan Young, City Attorney