

From: [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#)
To: [BOS-Supervisors](#)
Cc: [Calvillo, Angela \(BOS\)](#); [Somera, Alisa \(BOS\)](#); [Ng, Wilson \(BOS\)](#); [Major, Erica \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: All Electric Building Code + Gas Stovetops
Date: Monday, February 1, 2021 10:49:26 AM

From: Brian Turner <cawley@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 30, 2021 12:29 PM
To: Board of Supervisors, (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>
Subject: All Electric Building Code + Gas Stovetops

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I recently sent the following comments to the office of my supervisor, Hillary Ronen, concerning the 'All-Electric Buildings' legislation put forward by Supervisor Mandelman. Ronen's staff suggested that I should forward my comments to the Board of Supervisors directly so that they can be included in the legislative file.

I was interested to see the recent SF Chronicle article by JD Morris, 'Bay Area natural gas bans spread in 2020.' I have mixed feelings and, as my supervisor - and someone who has a direct voice in deciding how these particular legislative goals move forward - you seem like the right person to reach out to about this.

As a sustainability-minded architect who is well aware of the steep toll that the construction, operation and demolition of buildings takes on our environment, I'm thrilled to see the momentum behind phasing out natural gas in favor of clean electric in many of our building systems - but dismayed to see those efforts blindly extended to our stovetops.

Aside from the environmental impact (and the dollars and cents on their electricity bills), no one in the general public cares about whether our water is heated or our air conditioned using gas or electric energy sources. I mean that in a positive sense -switching to electric water heaters isn't going to raise any hackles among the general public.

Food, on the other hand, do I need to point out that food is central to human culture? That legislation which dictates how people can prepare their food has a real cultural impact that should be taken into account? That a lot of folks feel very strongly about having this choice made for them?

Do gas stove tops have a real environmental cost compared to electric stovetops powered by sustainable sources? Yes. Given that, it makes sense to incentivize the use of electric. It does not make sense to ban the use of the gas stove tops which many restaurant workers and home chefs will tell you have significant benefits both in terms of what kind of food we can cook and on the experience of cooking.

When you're dealing with a tool that is so central to human culture - the stovetop - people deserve the right to choose and, yes, if they choose to cook with gas it is not unreasonable to say that they should pay to offset the environmental costs of that choice. But government and building codes should absolutely not make that choice for people.

This is the type of blind overreach that we've seen imperil good progressive legislation over and over again. The vast majority of the benefits of switching to all-electric building systems can be achieved without the general public even taking notice, let alone objection. We shouldn't lump on this one thing - mandating how people can cook their food - that is going to generate strong reactions from the general public and imperil common sense legislation by dragging it into the culture wars.

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