

1 [Support of Building Code - Mandating New Construction Be All-Electric, File Number: **200701**]

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3 **Resolution urging the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor to adopt File Number 200701, an**
4 **Ordinance amending the Building Code to require new construction to exclude natural gas and**
5 **include exclusively all-electric energy sources;**

6 WHEREAS, the City and County of San Francisco has a duty to promote safety, improve the
7 health of its citizens, and enhance and protect our City’s natural environment; and

8 WHEREAS, San Francisco’s geologic and topographic conditions create safety challenges due
9 to increased risk for earthquake-induced failure; and,

10 WHEREAS, this same challenging topography also creates increased risk of fire due to high
11 density of buildings on very small lots and high population density; and,

12 WHEREAS, natural gas infrastructure may rupture, fail, and/or explode due to earthquake-
13 induced structural failure; and,

14 WHEREAS, the addition of new natural gas infrastructure in newly constructed buildings
15 increases acute and cumulative fire risk across the City; and,

16 WHEREAS, the elderly, the poor, young children, those with pre-existing medical conditions,
17 and communities of color are the most likely to suffer disproportionately from the health impacts of
18 climate change and may lack the resources to recover quickly from climate-related disasters; and,

19 WHEREAS, the combustion of natural gas emits a wide range of air pollutants, such as carbon
20 monoxide, nitrogen oxide, and particulate matter which have been linked to various acute and chronic
21 health effects including asthma in children, respiratory illness, cardiovascular disease, and premature
22 death; and,

23 WHEREAS, low-income communities and communities of color spend a disproportionate
24 amount of their income on energy and are more likely to suffer from asthma due to poor indoor air
25 quality; and

1 WHEREAS, the San Francisco Commission on the Environment seeks to improve, enhance,
2 and preserve the environment and to promote San Francisco's long-term environmental sustainability
3 as set forth in Section 4.118 of the City Charter; and,

4 WHEREAS, climate change has already affected San Francisco to varying degrees including
5 poor air quality from wildfires, drought, flooding, and extreme heat; and,

6 WHEREAS, production, transportation, and combustion of natural gas are also significant
7 contributors to climate change, which poses unique risks to the City in the form of sea level rise,
8 extreme heat, and increased frequency of extreme storms and droughts; and,

9 WHEREAS, the operation of buildings in 2018, was responsible for 44% of citywide
10 greenhouse gas emissions; and,

11 WHEREAS, in 2017, 80% of greenhouse gas emissions from the operation of buildings
12 citywide was due to consumption of natural gas or district steam produced via combustion of natural
13 gas; and,

14 WHEREAS, San Francisco has established an ambitious goal of achieving net zero emissions
15 by 2050 in order to do its part to stabilize the planet and protect the health of its residents; and,

16 WHEREAS, San Francisco continues to be a global climate action leader, having already met
17 City goals by reducing greenhouse gas emissions 35% from 1990 levels by 2018, while the City's
18 economy has grown 172% and its population has increased 22% during that time; and,

19 WHEREAS, reducing reliance on natural gas systems improves building safety, reduces fire
20 risk, and simplifies building systems and maintenance; and

21 WHEREAS, requiring energy-efficient and all-electric systems in buildings at the time of new
22 construction is more cost-effective than replacing equipment in good working order; and

23 WHEREAS, to achieve the City's goal of net zero emissions, it is necessary to discontinue the
24 installation of equipment dependent on fossil fuels, and instead, install high-efficiency equipment that
25 uses electricity and does not emit greenhouse gas; and,

1 WHEREAS, zero-emissions buildings benefit the safety, health, and welfare of San Francisco
2 and its residents by improving indoor air quality, alleviating conditions aggravating asthma, and
3 reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions from energy consumption; now, therefore, be it,

4 RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment urges the Board of Supervisors and the
5 Mayor to adopt File Number 200701, an ordinance to reduce safety, health, and environmental risk by
6 eliminating the use of natural gas in new construction ; and, be it,

7 FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment urges the Board of
8 Supervisors and the Mayor to continue to support policies that help San Francisco reach its goal of
9 achieving net zero emissions from all buildings by 2050.

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11 I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Commission on the Environment at its
12 meeting on July 28, 2020.

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15 Charles Sheehan, Chief Policy and Public Affairs Officer

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17 Vote: 7-0 Approved

18 Ayes: Commissioners Stephenson, Ahn, Bermejo, Chu, Sullivan, Wald, and Wan

19 Noes: None

20 Absent: None