



AB 3232 would ramp up energy efficiency standards for homes to cut greenhouse gas emissions, but critics say swapping gas furnaces, water heaters and appliances for all-electric houses is unnecessary and will cost too much. **Lezlie Sterling** - lsterling@sacbee.com

CALIFORNIA FORUM

## Most of us can't afford to go all-electric. Here's a fairer way to curb climate change

BY GEORGE MINTER  
*Special to The Sacramento Bee*

April 20, 2018 05:00 AM  
Updated 46 minutes ago

On Wednesday, lawmakers in Sacramento are set to debate legislation aimed at taking away Californians' right to make choices about the energy they use in their homes and businesses.

Assembly Bill 3232 would drive up energy bills, make housing more expensive and stall innovation. State leaders should consider affordability and Californians' preferences.

SoCalGas supports efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions and has long been a leader in developing appliances and programs that deliver meaningful emissions reductions. In fact, since 1990, our energy efficiency programs have reduced emissions equal to taking 700,000 cars off the road.

These advances have enabled us to achieve the greenhouse gas reductions required under existing climate regulations years ahead of schedule. But we cannot support legislation that takes away our customers' right to choose the most affordable energy source to meet their daily needs.

---

### Breaking News

Be the first to know when big news breaks

Enter Email Address

I'm not a robot

reCAPTCHA  
Privacy - Terms

SIGN UP

A recent poll conducted by the California Building Industry Association found that only 10 percent of voters in California would choose to buy an all-electric home, and 80 percent oppose making gas appliances illegal. Moreover, forcing families already struggling with the high cost of housing and rising transportation costs to swap out their perfectly good appliances for all electric alternatives would be a new and unfair burden.

These proposed swaps would cost the average household in Southern California up to \$877 each year and would require most homes to undergo retrofits and unnecessary construction costing thousands of dollars. Natural gas end uses in residential and commercial buildings in California account for only about 7 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the state. We need to make smart investments to reduce those emissions that do not drive us deeper into the affordable housing and homelessness crises we're facing.

While some have fallen under the spell of electrification advocates, energy providers and policy makers should focus on policies that reduce emissions and keep costs as low as possible for hard working families and businesses.

A more affordable option to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is to capture methane from farms, wastewater treatment plants and landfills and deliver it to customers through existing infrastructure. A recently released analysis found that we could achieve the same greenhouse gas reductions as electrifying buildings at a much lower cost by replacing just a fraction of the natural gas we deliver through our pipelines with this renewable fuel.

That's why we support legislation by Sen. Ben Hueso, D-San Diego, that would speed up the delivery of renewable natural gas to our customers.

We're also developing new technologies to further reduce emissions. Right now, we're working with a leading manufacturer to deliver a new natural gas furnace that reduces emissions by 65 percent and is one of several models that now meet the state's ambitious air pollution standards.

The expanded development of renewable natural gas coupled with technology innovations effectively reduces emissions and protects the 90 percent of families in Southern California who already have natural gas appliances. It also means that families and businesses don't have to do anything. No costly retrofits. No costly new appliances. No significant bill increases from the electric company. Nine out of 10 Southern California families choose natural gas for space and water heating and they prefer it 4 to 1 over electricity because it is inexpensive and more reliable.

It is time for lawmakers in Sacramento to hear from the millions of Californians who care about the environment but who are opposed to the most expensive solution to combating climate change. We urge members of the Assembly Energy and Utilities committee to vote no on AB 3232.

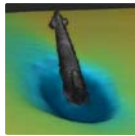
GEORGE MINTER IS REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY AT SOCALGAS. REACH HIM AT GMINTER@SEMPRAUTILITIES.COM.



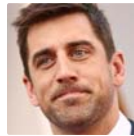
SUGGESTED FOR YOU



10 Scenes Famous Actors Regret Doing



Missing Sub That May Have Brought Nazis to South America Found



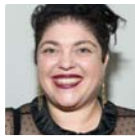
The Truth About Danica Patrick and Aaron Rodgers' Relationship



Things Only Adults Notice in 'Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles'



The Messed Up Part of 'White Christmas' Everyone Just Ignores



Bush-Bashing Professor Has School Scrambling to Keep Donors



Woman Killed on Southwest Flight Was 'Bedrock' of Her Family



Awkwardness Ensues as Senator Asks Zuckerberg Where He's Staying

COMMENTS



SPONSORED CONTENT

Do You Know the Impact Alcohol Could Be Having on Your Sleep Quality?

By Sleep Number — For Matt Ystad, having access to his sleep metrics has led him to change some behaviors.