

PLUMBERS & GASFITTERS LOCAL 12 BOSTON



United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and
Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada
Affiliated with A.F. of L. and C.I.O.



1240 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, BOSTON, MA 02125
TEL. (617) 288-6200

March 31, 2022

The Honorable Karen Spilka
State House
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Michael Barrett
State House
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Michael Rodrigues
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear President Spilka, Senator Barrett and Senator Rodrigues:

RE: Senate Climate Bill

My name is Tim Fandel, I am the Business Manager of Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 12. Our organization in conjunction with the signatory contractor partners at the Greater Boston Plumbing Contractors Association represent and employ over 3,000 men and women working every day in the plumbing and gas fitting industry in Massachusetts. I respect the hard work that the Senate has done to help address the real and serious issue of climate change. It is important to note the Senate willingness to solicit input from a variety of important stakeholder including Organized labor, industry experts from a variety of sectors, the business community as well as members of the public to help develop what we hope will be a fair and equitable solution for everyone.

The enactment of Chapter 8 of the Acts of 2021 is a broad and monumental law that sets forth aggressive carbon reduction emissions objectives. Chapter 8 also establishes several processes and proceedings by which the steps necessary to achieve broad objectives are actually implemented in the Commonwealth after considering input by experts, regulators, consumers, and those of us who work in the energy, building and development industries. Much of this work is currently underway running parallel to other state ordered activities like the Clean Heat Commission and the Department of Public Utilities inquiry into the future of natural gas.

Our organizations have been involved and participated in many of these formal commissions and activities I would urge you to support the efforts presently underway and allow this work to conclude with the respective rules, recommendations, findings and robust information that will not only implement Chapter 8 but inform further and future policy considerations by both the House and Senate.

Our work is making clear that sustainably reducing emissions in key areas, such as the building sector, must acknowledge the realities of key constraints such as cost, consumer acceptance, the adequacy of our power supply and the entire portfolio of viable options that exist to lower carbon emissions.

Specifically, **we strongly urge you to resist measures that would allow individual communities to require only all electric new construction and prohibit the installation of gas pipeline infrastructure.** These types of policies not only presume there is an unlimited clean affordable supply of power; they also make the **equally wrong assumption that existing pipeline infrastructure cannot be a source of decarbonized energy in the future.** Respectfully this is an important part of the discussion that is not getting the attention it deserves and it is time it did. As you know, we have thousands of miles of existing gas transmission and distribution piping infrastructure that has already been paid for and which can be utilized for emerging technologies such as Hydrogen and renewable natural gas. Utilizing wind and solar we can produce produce green hydrogen which certainly align with the goals articulated in the proposed legislation. I do not understand why is this not an important part of the conversation. We should be pulling every lever we can if we hope to get to net-zero outcomes.

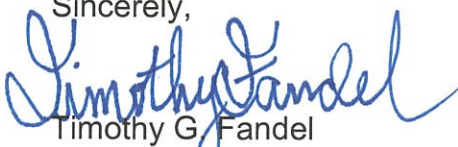
I ask you to take a moment to review January's wholesale electric rates which were some of the highest they have ever been on a sustained basis and the emissions from the energy sources that generated that electricity were dramatically higher than previous January's. Why you ask because during peak periods of energy need, we are consuming the dirtiest of fuels, at the highest of prices to make electricity.

Electrical power does not grow on trees and electrification objectives that do not acknowledge power supply constraints and realities might be well intended but nonetheless rhetorical. Please do not exacerbate the January high cost and high emissions energy spiral but creating unrealistic demands for new power that doesn't exist and won't for some time.

The Commonwealth will be best served by incorporating multiple decarbonization pathways in plan to address climate change. I believe it is very important to increase our clean power generation sources and establishing clean wind power industry is one of the ways to get there and realize large economies of scale. We also know from the work of our thousands of union brothers and sisters who have installed and maintain our transmission and distribution pipeline infrastructure that new renewable energy sources like hydrogen and renewable natural gas are viable decarbonizing pathways that avoid billions of dollars in new costs and broaden the portfolio of options that can actually get us to net-zero outcomes.

In my opinion, obviating the good work that is now underway to implement Chapter 8 further frustrates the potential for achievable and affordable emission reduction solutions by subject matter experts and impacted stakeholders.

Sincerely,



Timothy G. Fandel
Plumbers and Gasfitters Local Union 12
Business Manager
Financial Secretary-Treasurer