

July 12, 2022
UM 2178 – PCH

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony for the OR PUC's Natural Gas Fact Finding PCH.

My name is Bonnie New. I reside in Hood River, and am a natural gas customer by virtue of natural gas appliances in my home.

Chair Decker mentioned at the beginning of this meeting that one of the main charges of the PUC is to protect customers. In that vein, I want to present facts regarding the economic and existential threat of our lifetimes, climate change. These facts apply equally to those of us who are customers and everybody else, and we all equally need your protection.

1st fact:

Climate change is at a crisis level at this time. Crisis is [defined](#) as

“a stage in a sequence of events at which the trend of all future events, for better or for worse, is determined; a turning point.”

We are there right now. Decisions we make/you make today, right now, will determine the trend of future events related to climate change. The words of one of our previous testifiers are most appropriate: with respect to climate change, winning slowly is indeed the same as losing.

2nd fact:

Regulatory action at the federal level has long been insufficient to meet the climate crisis, and the Supreme Court recently further squelched meaningful action at the federal level. It is now up to states to mount immediate and robust policy changes to protect the lives and livelihoods of all Americans.

3rd fact:

The most urgent and high-value action to respond to the climate crisis is to **transition as quickly and efficiently as possible away from fossil fuels**. This includes, of course, methane, so called “natural gas,” used in buildings. This is **the** most urgent action needed at state, national, and international levels.

Because of facts 1, 2, and 3 above, The PUC needs to adopt policies that reduce gas use. However,

4th fact:

The PUC's draft report instead prescribes prolongation of gas use in buildings, including extending lines to new construction and adding additional gas customers.

Because of facts 1, 2, and 3 above, the PUC needs to aggressively avoid incentivizing fossil fuel use, including “natural” gas, in buildings. However,

5th fact:

Subsidies for fossil fuel have long been in place, and the PUC’s draft report appears to perpetuate them. Subsidy for any aspect of fossil fuel production, infrastructure, transportation, or use – is incompatible with **transitioning as quickly and efficiently as possible away from fossil fuels.**

Thank you for your work on this very important matter, and for considering my testimony.

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