



AFFORDABLE DEPENDABLE ENERGY CHOICES

BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy launches to draw attention to the need to keep affordable, dependable energy choices to heat homes, cook food, run businesses as municipalities increasingly block options for new homes, buildings

VANCOUVER – A new coalition was launched today to draw public attention to the need to keep affordable, dependable energy choices available to heat homes, cook food and run businesses as municipalities increasingly block options for new homes and buildings.

The BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy [BC CADE] is drawing support from many different sectors, says Coalition Director Bill Tieleman, including businesses small and large, labour and not for profit groups.

They are all concerned that early municipal imposition of the Zero Carbon Step Code regulations banning renewable natural gas and natural gas and – in the future – hydrogen – fuel sources from all new buildings will dramatically raise energy costs for the public and business while increasing dependence on just one source – electricity.

And right now, BC Hydro estimates that only 19% of BC’s total energy is supplied by electricity, Tieleman says.

“At a time when BC Hydro had to import \$500 million worth of electricity last year due to droughts affecting hydroelectric dam power and with more potential droughts this year, it’s time to ensure British Columbians have choices available to provide dependable and affordable energy to heat their homes, cook their food and run their businesses, not to block energy sources that may be critical to our province,” Tieleman said.

“With several municipalities passing bylaws that block their residents from choosing renewable natural gas and natural gas now – and hydrogen in the future – it means heating homes and running businesses will become more expensive and less dependable,” Tieleman says. “And it will take away from residents in those municipalities their option to have a gas stove, a fireplace and a barbeque – we need to keep those choices, not eliminate them.”

The founding members of the Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy include: the BC Restaurant and Food Services Association; the International Union of Electrical Workers Local 213; the Surrey Board of Trade; the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade; the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association of Canada; Restaurants Canada; UA Local 170; the Canadian

Federation of Independent Business – BC Branch; Valor Radiant Gas Fireplaces; Pioneer Fireplace; the Limona Group; the South Asian Business Association; Northwest Stoves; AlignWest Homes; the Alliance of Beverage Licensees BC; and the BC Hotels Association.

“Our goal is to make sure British Columbians know that decisions being made by municipal governments have already taken away residents’ energy choices in several large cities like Vancouver, Nanaimo, Richmond and Victoria and that others are considering doing the same, with little input from the citizens and businesses that will be negatively affected,” Tieleman says.

“We are not against electrification, but we are for allowing British Columbians to make wise decisions that will protect both their ability to heat their homes and run their businesses with dependable, affordable energy choices today and in the years ahead – and to support the transition towards a renewable energy future,” Tieleman said.

“Renewable natural gas and natural gas now and hydrogen in the years ahead can provide clean, renewable energy – but if new buildings are not able to install the necessary fittings for gas as they are being built now, retrofitting for RNG or hydrogen will be prohibitively expensive,” Tieleman said.

“Municipalities that are imposing the Zero Carbon Step Code regulations now that aren’t scheduled to come into effect until 2030 are not just jumping the gun – they are forcing unnecessarily costly expenses on homeowners and businesses,” he said.

“And the province is offloading its responsibility to regulate energy issues onto municipalities, whose staff don’t have energy policy expertise,” Tieleman added. “This is creating a confusing patchwork of rules for builders and developers where what is acceptable in one city is banned in another city, adding unnecessary costs that will impact the whole province.”

“BC CADE is telling municipal governments to stop eliminating choice for new residential and commercial buildings – let builders and owners decide for themselves what’s best, not impose one option only that could be a huge mistake,” Tieleman said.

The BC CADE website – www.bccade.ca – explains the choices BC needs to make to continue to have affordable, dependable energy and why with current drought conditions there could be a serious electricity shortage and high import costs.

PLEASE SEE QUOTES FROM SOME BC CADE MEMBERS FOLLOWING.

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What they are saying – quotes from some BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy:

British Columbia Restaurant and Foodservices Assn – Ian Tostenson, President/CEO:
 “Natural gas and eventually renewable natural gas is a critical and affordable cornerstone of our 18 billion dollar restaurant industry. It fuels the diversity and ethnicity of kitchens throughout BC. The conversion of our industry to electricity would render us practically inoperable and financial devastated.”

Canadian Federation of Independent Business - Jairo Yunis, CFIB's Director for BC and Western Economic Policy: "BC small businesses are concerned about governments plans to restrict dependable and cost-effective energy sources like natural gas. Access to reliable and affordable energy is essential for small businesses to thrive and drive much-needed economic growth in the province. If these restrictions move forward, both residents and businesses will be forced to absorb higher energy costs, diminishing the province's competitiveness."

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 213 – Jim Lofty, Business Manager: "IBEW Local 213 is pleased to work with other labour, business and community groups to ensure that British Columbia has the energy it needs, when and where it needs it - that's what our members help do right across the province."

Surrey Board of Trade - Anita Huberman, President & CEO: "The Surrey Board of Trade has joined this initiative to ensure that there is access to a variety of clean and affordable energy sources, which is key to the development of agriculture, businesses, communications, education, healthcare and transportation."

Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association of Canada - Laura Litchfield, President: "We are thrilled to join this strong coalition of businesses, labour organizations, and allied associations working to protect consumer choice. It is critical to ensure B.C. residents have access to affordable and dependable energy, and we are heartened to see the enthusiasm of our coalition partners toward achieving this shared goal."

Greater Vancouver Board of Trade - Bridgitte Anderson, CEO and President: "We are happy to join the call for a reliable and affordable approach to energy policy that is good for consumers and for business. We need a practical and coordinated approach, not a patchwork of rules that change when you cross a municipal boundary."