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BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy supports new BC Conservative provincial government plan to end municipal government bans on natural gas and restore choice of energy for new construction, improve affordability for homeowners and businesses

BC CADE agrees with plan to stop municipal governments from imposing electricity-only rules

VANCOUVER – The BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy [BC CADE] is supporting the new BC Conservative provincial government's plan to end municipal government bans on the use of natural gas in new residential and business construction and other legislation that restricts energy choice.

That support and a call for quick action also comes from BC CADE members the Canadian Federation of Independent Business BC Branch and the BC Restaurant and Foodservices Association.

BC CADE says Premier-Elect Lorne Doerkson's new government should implement its election policy platform that includes moving to: "**stop municipal bans on gas connections and mandatory heating technologies.**" [bolding added]

BC CADE suggests that the province quickly rescind the Zero Carbon Step Code provisions of the BC Building Code to restore choice of energy for new construction and end the effective ban on natural gas and renewable natural gas in order to promote affordability and reliability of energy supply.

"The previous BC government allowed over 30 individual municipalities to adopt Zero Carbon Step Code provisions years ahead of provincial plans, creating a confusing patchwork quilt of regulations that made new housing and business construction more expensive and more complicated," says Bill Tieleman, BC CADE Director. "It's time to recognize the importance of affordability and dependability by ending the effective ban on natural gas and renewable natural gas in new construction."

BC CADE – representing over 300,000 British Columbians through its members in business, labour and community organizations – says early adoption of the Zero Carbon

Step Code has by municipalities like Victoria, Richmond, New Westminster and Burnaby has led to different rules for new construction from city to city that cause grief for builders and developers.

Ian Tostenson, BC Restaurant and Food Services Association President and CEO, says that the effective ban on natural gas in new construction meant restaurants in new buildings that depend on natural gas for cooking quickly were severely restricted.

“Our member restaurants in over 30 municipalities couldn’t consider moving to new buildings because of the effective natural gas ban – that was the last thing we needed at a time when restaurants are facing skilled labour shortages and affordability issues in one of the most difficult industries to survive in,” Tostenson said.

“We hope the new BC government will act quickly to stop municipalities from banning natural gas and focus on improving our economy,” he added.

Ryan Mitton, Canadian Federation of Independent Business BC Branch Legislative Director, says small businesses have been penalized by the Zero Carbon Step Code where adopted early by municipalities.

“Over half of small businesses tell us that municipal bans on natural gas have either hurt or will hurt their costs and operations. At a time when more businesses are closing than opening, increasing their costs only deepens our entrepreneurial drought. To reverse this trend, we need to return energy choice to BC businesses and stop the gas ban.” Mitton said.

BC CADE’s Tieleman says the province needs to rescind existing Zero Carbon Step Code provisions adopted prematurely by municipalities, not just stop other cities and towns from adopting them.

“The government should ensure that energy regulations are the same in every city and town, not a patchwork of different rules, or we’ll continue to have confusing and expensive issues with new construction,” Tieleman said. “It would be a mistake to have some municipalities with one building code and others with another one.”

The BC Conservative Party election platform states that it will: “Build resource infrastructure. We will expand gas transmission and hydrogen infrastructure, keep natural gas available in every community and **stop municipal bans on gas connections and mandatory heating technologies.**” [bolding added]

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Background

The BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy [BC CADE] is a coalition bringing together businesses, business organizations, labour unions, and others to support choice on affordable, dependable energy. Coalition members include:

- Canadian Federation of Independent Business – BC Branch
- BC Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Vancouver Board of Trade
- Surrey Board of Trade
- BC Restaurant and Foodservices Association
- Restaurants Canada
- Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association of Canada
- BC Craft Brewers Guild
- BC Asian Restaurant Cafe Owners Association
- International Union of Electrical Workers Local 213
- UA Local 170
- BC Building Trades
- Mott Electric
- Canadian Institute of Plumbing and Heating
- The Limona Group
- South Asian Business Association
- Northwest Stoves
- Align West Homes
- Alliance of Beverage Licensees BC
- Concorde Distributing
- Jackson Grills
- Ready Propane
- Napoleon Grills & Fireplaces
- Continental Fireplaces & HVAC
- Valor Radiant Gas Fireplaces
- Pioneer Fireplace
- Maxquip
- Regency Fireplace Products
- Heat Savers
- Burden Propane
- Urban Fireplaces
- Quadra Homes
- Isle of Mann Property Group
- Patriot Homes