

Taylor, Bernice

From: Patrick W Barrett III <jbrealtyllc@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 31, 2023 3:48 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Lucey, Thomas J; Denise Jillson; Beth O'Neill Maloney; dmaher@cambridgechamber.org; Jason Alves; Farooq, Iram; Sarah Eusden Gallop; Robert Winters; Joan Pickett; Blier, Suzanne; City Clerk
Subject: Reject Gas Ban Pilot

Mayor Siddiqui, Ordinance Committee, and Honorable City Council:

Climate change is the challenge of our time and in a very short span of time the Council has passed regulations on embodied carbon emissions, climate resiliency zoning, adopted the specialized stretch code, and most recently adopted the most stringent greenhouse gas regulations in the nation in the amendments to BEUDO. The pilot program that the Council is now contemplating would be the fifth massive overhaul of climate regulations passed in the last seven months. The program itself is deeply flawed in that it exempts laboratories and medical facilities who, according to CDD, contribute the most to greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, according to CDD, there are 20 buildings alone that contribute over 54% of greenhouse gas emissions. Kendall Square should be the focus of this council's environmental ire, not the small businesses of East Cambridge, Central Square, Harvard Sq, and beyond. Further, this pilot will impact homeowners, renters, small businesses, and smaller commercial buildings the hardest and exclusively. It is hard to justify the adoption of an ordinance like this when the largest contributors of greenhouse gas emissions do not have to participate.

The restaurant community has barely survived the pandemic, and are still straddled with massive losses and debt. They deserve a hiatus from even more impactful regulations that would have a negligible effect on climate but create inequities where only those nestled at the base of labs would be allowed to renovate or build out using gas infrastructure. Cambridge is blessed in having such a wide variety of people and culture represented in their cuisine shared in and among our community; surely the Council does not mean to shut these groups out?

I ask that you opt out of the pilot program and allow us to better understand the impact of the four other very similar ordinances you've recently passed and in the name of environmental justice allow a much bigger city with less regulations like Boston take our place. Cambridge has done more than any other community in the commonwealth to address what is a global problem. We should feel a deep sense of pride in our recent accomplishments, but we need to better understand their impact before we add additional layers, especially when Kendall Sq, who contributes the lion's share of greenhouse gas emissions in Cambridge, does not have to participate.

Respectfully,

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