



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Resource Management Commission

Recommendation No. 20220124-010

Resolution on CenterPoint Energy's Natural Gas Energy Efficiency Pilot Program

Whereas a representative from CenterPoint Energy presented its proposal for a pilot energy efficiency program at the November 16, 2021 meeting of the Resource Management Commission; and

Whereas on September 30, 2021, the Austin City Council adopted the Austin Climate Equity Plan; and

Whereas the Austin Climate Equity Plan includes the Sustainable Buildings goal that by 2030 “*All new buildings are net-zero carbon, emissions from existing buildings are reduced by 25%, and all natural gas-related emissions are reduced by 30%*” and includes energy efficiency and building electrification as key strategies to meet this goal; and

Whereas the pilot energy efficiency program must be approved by the Austin City Council prior to implementation;

Whereas prior to the pilot program being considered by the Austin City Council, the Resource Management Commission has been asked to provide feedback and recommendations regarding the pilot program proposal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Resource Management Commission recommends that the Austin City Council approve the CenterPoint Energy Natural Gas Energy Efficiency Pilot Program, with the following modifications and observations:

1. The pilot program as written indicates that new construction projects are not eligible for natural gas equipment rebates. The Resource Management Commission strongly recommends that the Austin City Council should ensure the exclusion of rebates for natural gas equipment in new construction remains, as incentivizing natural gas use in new construction is not compatible with the City's Climate Equity Plan targeting net zero carbon by 2040, including the focus area of Sustainable Buildings. Specifically, the plan has the following goal by 2030, which is incompatible with encouraging fossil fuel combustion in new construction:

“All new buildings are net-zero carbon, emissions from existing buildings are reduced by 25%, and all natural gas-related emissions are reduced by 30% “
[\(<https://www.austintexas.gov/page/austin-climate-equity-plan>\)](https://www.austintexas.gov/page/austin-climate-equity-plan)
2. Recommend CenterPoint to include rebates for Duct Sealing and Ceiling Insulation and other cost-effective weatherization measures and to coordinate with other utilities for program implementation.
3. Cooperate with local Water Utilities for Home Conservation Improvement Products Program and Commercial Direct Install Program, as rebates for these programs are focused on water-saving technologies such as Showerheads and Aerators.

4. Encourage CenterPoint to consider the substitution of Duct Sealing, Ceiling Insulation, and cost-effective weatherization measures instead of central furnace and water heater rebates.

Vote: 8-0

For: Commissioner Jonathon Blackburn, Chair; Commissioner Kaiba White, Vice Chair; Commissioner Charlotte Davis; Commissioner Sam Angoori; Commissioner Tom “Smitty” Smith; Commissioner Dana Harmon; Commissioner Rebecca Brenneman; Commissioner Lisa Chavarria

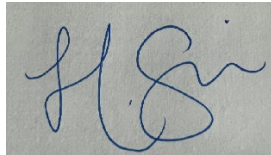
Against: None

Abstentions: None

Off Dais: Commissioner Shane Johnson; Commissioner Louis Stone

Absences: Commissioner Kelly Davis

Vacancies: None



Natasha Goodwin, Staff Liaison