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The Honorable Eric Burlison
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
1108 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Maxwell Frost
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
1224 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Burlison and Ranking Member Frost,

On behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business, the nation's leading small business advocacy organization, I write regarding this week's Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs Subcommittee Hearing titled, "No Flame, More Pain: How State and Local Bans on Natural Gas Increase Costs." We thank the committee for examining how state and local energy policies drive up costs for small businesses and consumers across the country.

In last year's Small Business Energy Survey, 80% of our members indicated that energy costs have a significant impact on their business. Additionally, nearly all (92%) reported that their inputs increased since 2022. A majority of owners indicated that they had to increase consumer prices to absorb the rise in energy costs.¹ Such concerns follow NFIB's 2020 *Problems and Priorities* survey, in which small businesses ranked the cost of natural gas, propane, gasoline, diesel, and fuel oil as their 6th most pressing issue, with electricity costs following at 10th overall.²

One significant contributor to increasing energy costs is the onerous federal, state and local policies that restrict access or set rigid mandates on energy usage. These policies can take the form of state renewable energy mandates for wind and solar, local bans on gas powered products, or federal incentives that favor less reliable and more expensive energy sources. These policies not only increase costs, but they can reduce energy reliability when it is needed most during peak demand. For instance, due to overly generous subsidies in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), 93% of new utility-scale electricity capacity brought online in 2025 were for expensive wind, solar, and battery projects.³ Once those subsidies were repealed by Congress, renewable investment cratered, signaling that demand was not driven by economics or market demand.

These policies may sound good to politicians in local government, state capitals and Washington, but without generous subsidies, renewable energy production is expensive, and these costs are passed on

¹ Holly Wade, Peter Hansen, and Madeline Oldstone, Small Business Energy Survey, *NFIB Research Center*, February 2026. <https://www.nfib.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/NFIB-2026-Energy-Survey.pdf>.

² Holly Wade & Madeline Oldstone, Small Business Problems & Priorities, *NFIB Research Center*, July 2024. <http://bit.ly/40uXas5>.

³ WSJ Editorial Board, "The Real Risk to the Electric Grid," *Wall Street Journal*, 20 July 2025. <https://www.wsj.com/opinion/the-real-risk-to-the-energy-grid-wind-solar-power-data-shortage-c297e93b>.

to consumers and small businesses in the form of higher energy costs. Additionally, renewable energy sources can be unreliable, energy intensive to produce, require significant critical mineral inputs, have a massive land footprint, require backup power generation capacity, and raise long-term environmental concerns from waste and harm to wildlife.

At the state and local level, these policies take the form of outright natural gas production bans like in New York state or the city of Alexandria, Virginia banning gas powered leaf blowers. While these bans are guised under environmental protection, the reality is the ban means a complete retrofitting of product lines for landscaping businesses that can impose hundreds of thousands of dollars on small businesses. These costs will be passed on to customers in the form of higher prices. In sum, these bans increase costs for small businesses and consumers and reduce economic opportunities for Americans.

Small businesses overwhelmingly oppose policies that restrict access to affordable and reliable energy and products. In a recent NFIB member ballot, 96% of NFIB members disagreed with bans or restrictions on consumer products based on the energy that they use.⁴ NFIB supports H.R. 3699, the *Energy Choice Act*, that would prohibit states or local governments from banning specific energy services, especially relating to natural gas. The *Energy Choice Act* prevents energy bans that hamper energy production, decimate local economies, and increase costs for small businesses and consumers.

As energy demand continues to rapidly increase, Congress must ensure energy production is able to keep up with the needs of small businesses and consumers. In practice, that means eliminating local, state or federal policies that allow government to pick winners and losers by banning products or imposing one-size-fits-all mandates.

Affordable and reliable energy can be make-or-break for many small businesses. NFIB strongly opposes energy bans, as they increase costs on small businesses across the country. Congress should enact the bipartisan H.R. 3699 to prevent energy bans. We look forward to working with the subcommittee throughout the remainder of this Congress to increase access to affordable and reliable energy.

Sincerely,



Louis A. Bertolotti
Principal, Federal Government Relations
NFIB

⁴ NFIB Member Ballot, Mandate, vol. 583., September 2023, *Should the federal government ban or restrict the purchase of consumer products like new gas-powered vehicles and equipment or natural gas cooktops?* (Yes: 96% No: 2% Undecided: 2%)