

Good morning. Nancy Boxer with the Association for Climate Health.

We are opposed to your first option. Substituting decarbonized gas, and piping it around the same leaky pipes will continue to pour carbon into the atmosphere. It also shares the safety and health risks of natural gas, so is no improvement to public health.

We are uncomfortable about the cost of a hybrid system, which requires buildings to maintain two HVAC systems even if one is rarely used. This is costly and burdens low income residents the most. Possible exception – inexpensive electric space heaters for residential users.

But a geothermal microdistrict has many advantages – saves jobs and money, is safer, helps achieve climate goals, repurposes potentially stranded assets. Provides cooling for those who otherwise can't afford it. Ground-source heat pumps had the most support and least opposition in your survey, and can satisfy the top concerns of survey respondents.

The City's own staff at Bartrams' Garden, the Police Tactical Training Site and Kensington High School all say their geothermal systems run quieter, smoother and cheaper than traditional HVAC systems. And for projects with a long time horizon, geothermal is cheaper, with a smaller carbon footprint, and a better safety record.

So why not let PGW try the most exciting future available to gas utilities today? Potential pilot sites include Community College, city health centers, municipal buildings, schools, housing projects, museums. Some could be networked together. Why not test-drive a geothermal microdistrict? We say, go for it.

Thank you for your time.

Testimony limited to 2 minutes of time.

Topic: PGC and Office of Sustainability Town Hall

Date: May 11, 2021

Time: 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)