From: Stella Ballarini
To: erda.sm.scopingplan
Subject: Public Comment on Draft Scoping Plan
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Dear Climate Action Council,

I am a restaurant operator in New York State, and I am writing to express my concern with the provision of the Draft Scoping Plan that would phase out my access to natural gas and gas cooking appliances.

In the context of a difficult Covid-19 recovery, rising food and supply costs, a labor shortage, and lingering pandemic debts, our industry is especially concerned about the costs associated with a forced transition from gas to electric. These include the cost of appliances and increased cost of utilities. Before the state elects to move forward with a transition like this, it is critical to have an economic impact study done to understand the costs, and the state must not place the economic burden squarely on the shoulders of struggling restaurants.

We are concerned about the capacity of the electric grid, especially when gas cooking appliances allow us to feed the most vulnerable in times of natural disaster and power outages. We believe this proposal also ignores the potential for other clean substitutes for natural gas, and ignores the reality that some commercial gas appliances simply do not have electric counterparts on the market. These are realities that must be addressed.

Finally, gas cooking appliances are the professional industry standard for a reason: they allow for cooking speeds and techniques that are not easily replicated with clunkier electric equipment, and they are not only preferable but essential for certain culturally treasured cooking styles, for instance, cooking with a wok requires a high heat flame that cannot be created by an electric stovetop.

New York City exempted commercial kitchens when they passed their version of electrification legislation -- we implore you to do the same statewide. Limiting my access to natural gas and natural gas appliances would be devastating to my business and livelihood.

Regards,
Stella Ballarini
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