

**Via Email**

September 17, 2021

**State Building Code Council**  
**Attn: Chair & SBCC Members**

**RE: Opposition to Proposals; 21-GP1-103, 21-GP1-136, & 21-GP1-179**

Honorable members of the State Building Code Council:

I write to you today to share my strong opposition to the following proposals; 21-GP1-103, 21-GP1-136, and 21-GP1-179 which are currently under consideration by the State Building Code Council. While building codes do address many of our community's most important concerns, including public health and safety, the constituents I represent in Northeast Spokane will be adversely affected by these over-reaching and unduly burdensome proposals. Housing affordability has been a significant issue across the region, however, these rising costs have been felt more deeply in neighborhoods across Northeast Spokane creating a significant disadvantage on many - including low income families. I oppose these proposals based on the absolutely disastrous impacts to my neighbors and constituents.

Each of these three proposals work in opposition to affordability and equity in housing by adding increased costs on commercial and multi-family residential dwellings in addition to the rising cost of supplies. Furthermore, the proposals make multifamily housing less affordable and eliminates choice within the housing market by increasing the cost of construction. These increased costs will produce a trickle-down effect with the burden falling on those most in need of housing solutions.

While there have been suggestions of a natural gas ban in the City of Spokane, City Council President Breean Beggs has stated "there are plenty of ways" for our community to avoid a natural gas ban. Additionally, the Spokane City Council's Sustainability Action Subcommittee has created a draft Sustainability Action Plan for the City Council to consider later this year. Through a heavy community engagement process and feedback from citizens, the concept of a natural gas ban in the Plan has been removed. Simply, the City of Spokane has indicated by its leaders' actions that a ban on natural gas is not in the best interest of the City or its residents. Moreover, the state legislature entertained a bill earlier this year which sought to eliminate natural gas in new construction, but ultimately declined to approve the bill.

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Given Spokane and the region's recent electrical grid experience with higher than normal uses of electricity during the summer heatwave, it is clear that adding additional pressures on our electrical infrastructure is not a sustainable strategy. Simply, we cannot add more demand and pressure to the electrical grid.

The building code process in Washington State has been successful in minimizing economic impact without sacrificing safety. When considering these proposals I would ask the Council to reflect on the positions of both the state legislature and the City of Spokane taking also into consideration future demands on our electric system which cannot meet the demand for energy in this state alone.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



**Council Member Michael Cathcart**  
Spokane City Council | District 1, Position 1