

## Protect Consumer's Access to Propane

**The Issue:** Multiple federal regulatory authorities have taken actions that would eliminate consumer choice for their energy needs. Propane is a clean, affordable, and reliable domestic energy source for over five million households in America. Congress should protect consumer choice and access to propane-powered appliances.

**Background:** The Department of Energy (DOE) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) have taken systematic steps on multiple occasions to limit the availability of consumer products. Propane is a vital fuel for many consumers across the country, and restricting access would have devastating impacts.

In May 2022, DOE issued a proposed rulemaking related to commercial water heaters that more than half of all commercial buildings could not comply with unless they completed complicated, extensive, and burdensome upgrades. In July 2022, DOE issued a notice of proposed rulemaking that, by DOE's admission, would force millions of residential consumers to switch from gas furnaces to electric alternatives.

In early January 2023, the media reported that a CPSC Commissioner stated "any option [was] on the table" to include a ban to limit the use of gas stoves. The Commission and the White House quickly retracted this statement, exclaiming there was "no plan" to ban gas stoves. However, on January 31, DOE released a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking (SNOPR) in which the agency proposed new and amended energy conservation standards for consumer conventional cooking products that would make 96% of the gas cooktops in the market out of compliance by 2027. In fact, only one gas stove that DOE tested met this new standard. Coincidentally, 100% of the electric (open) coil element cooktops and 80% of the electric cooktops would meet or exceed these new standards. The SNOPR's proposed standards not only encourage fuel switching but, given conversion costs, may compel fuel switching for consumers by eliminating gas stoves in the market. This compelled fuel switching and elimination of consumer choice are anticompetitive in nature and contrary to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. Additionally, the SNOPR has significant anticompetitive effects on small businesses that exclusively produce gas cooktops. By late February, the CPSC released a "request for information" on ways to "mitigate health hazards" from gas stoves.

The agencies have proposed these rules under the guise of decreasing emissions, improving health benefits, and increasing the efficiency of appliances by favoring electric appliances that are, ironically, powered by a grid fueled by fossil fuel. Nearly 60% of the electricity produced in the United States is derived from fossil sources, with 65% of all electricity produced wasted<sup>1</sup>. These regulatory actions do not reduce emissions; instead, it shifts emissions to different portions of the energy sector at a significant cost to consumers.

**The Ask:** Please protect consumers' access to propane, and other conventional, fueled appliances, including gas stoves, furnaces, and water heaters, by supporting S. 1043, *the Natural Gas Appliances Standards Act of 2023*, and H.R. 1640, *the Save Our Gas Stoves Act*.

<sup>1</sup> [https://flowcharts.llnl.gov/sites/flowcharts/files/2022-04/Energy\\_2021\\_United-States\\_0.png](https://flowcharts.llnl.gov/sites/flowcharts/files/2022-04/Energy_2021_United-States_0.png)