

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

December 21, 2022

Alexander Hoehn-Saric
Chair
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814

Dear Chairman Hoehn-Saric:

We write to express our concern regarding the risks posed to consumers from indoor air pollution generated by gas stoves, and to encourage the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to take action to address these risks.

Over a third of American households—more than 40 million homes—use a gas stove for cooking. Gas stoves emit high levels of pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). A range of studies have shown that, when used without adequate ventilation, cooking with a gas stove can raise indoor concentrations of these pollutants to levels that the Environmental Protection Agency considers to be unsafe even outdoors. Further, methane leaks from gas stoves inside U.S. homes were recently found to contribute the equivalent climate impacts as about 500,000 gasoline-powered cars and, importantly, more than three-quarters of the leaks occurred while the appliance was not in use.

In addition to the climate impacts, these emissions represent real health risks to millions of Americans. Both NO₂ and PM_{2.5} are known to exacerbate respiratory conditions. Short-term exposure to NO₂ is linked to worsening asthma in children, and long-term exposure has been determined to likely cause the development of asthma. Both pollutants have also been linked to cardiovascular impacts and a range of other adverse health issues. Even low-level CO exposure can exacerbate cardiovascular illness among people with coronary heart disease and other vulnerable populations.

These emissions can create a cumulative burden to households that are already more likely to face higher exposure to both indoor and outdoor air pollution. Statistics show that Black, Latino, and low-income households are more likely to experience disproportionate air pollution, either from being more likely to be located near a waste incinerator or coal ash site, or living in smaller homes with poor ventilation, malfunctioning appliances, mold, dust mites, secondhand smoke, lead dust, pests, and other maintenance deficiencies.

As you know, the CPSC has broad authority under the Consumer Product Safety Act to regulate consumer products that pose an unreasonable risk of injury. We urge the Commission to protect consumers from these harmful emissions. The Commission itself expressed concerns over gas

stove emissions in 1985. Since then, evidence for the danger of these emissions has only increased.

We understand that the CPSC adopted the following provision to this year's operating plan:

“Chronic Hazards: Rulemaking Activities: By March 1, 2023, staff will prepare and submit to the Commission a Request for Information (RFI) to seek public input on hazards associated with gas stoves and proposed solutions to those hazards.”

We are encouraged by this addition to the operating plan and urge the CPSC to move quickly on this RFI and use the responses to swiftly initiate impactful rulemaking. As part of this process, we ask the CPSC to explicitly evaluate the disparate health outcomes that occur from the coupling of gas stoves with the material realities to which the most vulnerable Americans are subjected, as well as evaluate the health impacts of gas leaks due to gas stove connections. Robust consideration of the distributional effects of regulatory action is a long-recognized best practice for agency decision making that is consistent with Executive Orders and guidance from the Office of Management & Budget.

We also request that the CPSC consider taking the following actions to help protect Americans from the hazards of gas stove emissions:

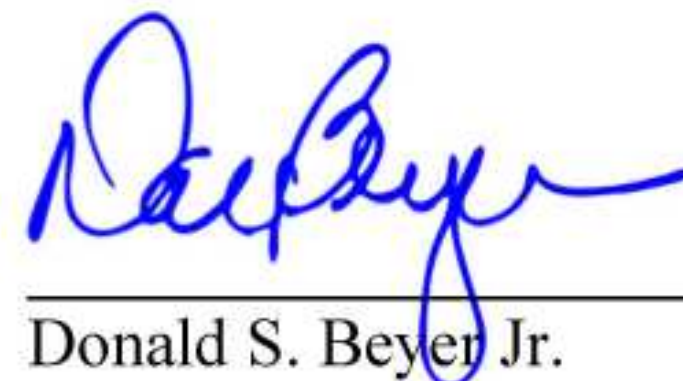
- Require gas stoves to be sold with range hoods that meet mandatory performance standards, assessing their efficiency of removing the pollutants,
- Where feasible, issue mandatory performance standards for gas stoves that address steady-state-off leakage, including requiring automatic shut-off valves,
- Where feasible, issue mandatory performance standards for gas stoves that address the health impacts of hazardous emissions,
- Require labels on gas stoves that educate consumers about their exposure risks,
- Launch a public education campaign on the health risks of cooking with a gas stove, and steps that consumers can take to minimize their risk.

Thank you for your attention on this matter. We look forward to supporting the Commission in your efforts to address this consumer product safety and critical health issue.

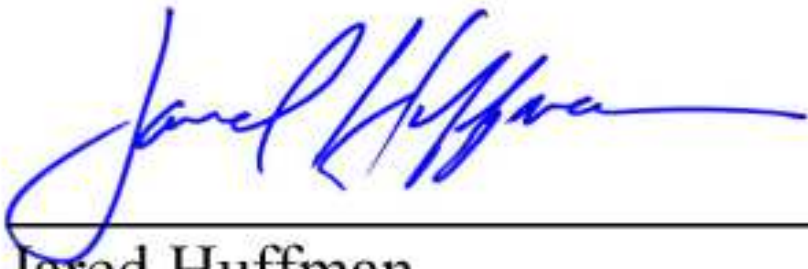
Sincerely,



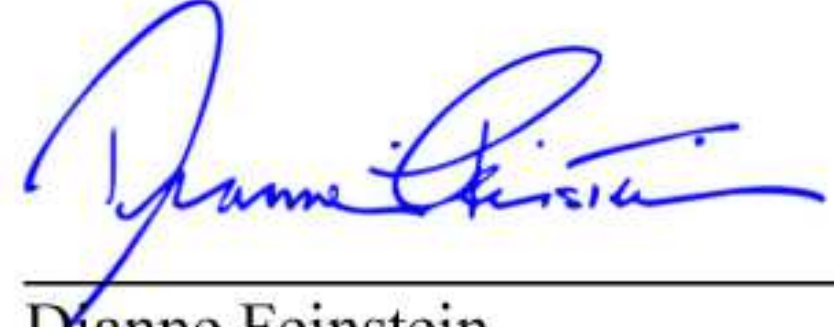
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United States Senator



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Shontel M. Brown
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MARK TAKANO
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Alan S. Lowenthal
Member of Congress
Chair, Subcommittee on
Energy and Mineral
Resources



Ted W. Lieu
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André Carson
Member of Congress



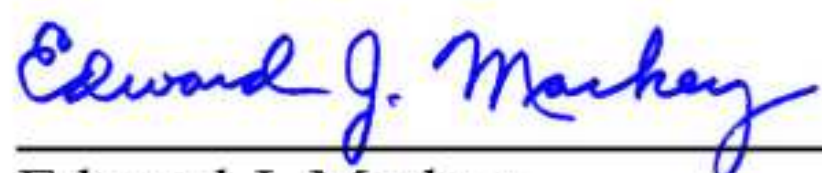
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United States Senator



Barbara Lee
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Jeffrey A. Merkley
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