To Vancouver City Council,

I am writing regarding the city’s new fossil fuel ordinance and urging support of residential energy code proposals especially regarding requirements for heat pump systems in new homes and stricter ventilation for gas stoves to protect indoor air quality and health.

As the climate crisis progresses, its impacts are increasingly felt here in Washington. In the past year alone we have seen the direct impacts of climate change in our droughts, wildfires, and heat waves which have cost hundreds of lives and had huge economic impacts across the state.

Buildings are the fasts growing source of carbon emission in Washington State, with this increase largely attributable to the use of fossil gas in homes and buildings. In 2018 burning fossil fuels in buildings sector in Washington produced 18 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent to the annual emissions from 3,957,182 cars or 5 coal plants. As such, Washington’s 2021 State Energy Strategy found that electrifying buildings will be the lowest cost pathway to meting the state’s climate goals of reducing emissions 95% from 1990 levels by 2050.

Heat pumps will also help us get there. Moving to highly efficient heat pump technology can reduce energy use for heating and cooling homes, especially in comparison to outdated window air conditions units. As we continue to see peak temperatures rise in the Pacific Northwest, more and more people will need AC units, which heat pumps provide alongside heating to cope with heat related health impacts, or to adequately cool their homes while they are shut inside to wildfire smoke.

I urge the Vancouver City Council to adopt the new fuel ordinance in their September 26 meeting.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Laurie Kerr

Battle Ground, Washington