

Dear Mayor Lightfoot,

January 25, 2023

As business leaders, we write to express strong business support for tackling climate emissions from Chicago's building sector. With nearly 70 percent of Chicago's climate emissions coming from buildings, meaningful action to reduce emissions from the city's buildings is paramount. Two specific policies we support are: passing building performance standards and a phase-out of fossil fuels in new buildings.

We represent architects, real estate developers, financial advisors, sustainability experts, renewable energy developers, energy efficiency contractors, and other business professionals from all parts of the city's economy. The technology to transition to cleaner buildings is available; we now need leadership from the Mayor's office and city ordinances that tap into the profound job creating, cost saving benefits of reducing building emissions.

We were excited to see the Mayor's office release recommendations from the Chicago Building Decarbonization Working Group, outlining ways to equitably reduce building emissions in the city while boosting Chicago's local economy & creating more clean energy jobs. We thank you for convening working groups to identify the importance of making Chicago's buildings cleaner, healthier, and more efficient. Action on clean and healthy buildings will be critical to meet the goal of reducing the City's current emissions 62 percent by 2040, as set forth in Chicago's 2022 Climate Action Plan.

To fully decarbonize our buildings, we must invest in both electrification and efficiency. Chicago is already home to more than 12,000 workers engaged in work related to clean buildings. In both Chicago and Illinois, energy efficiency and electrification of buildings employs at least 2 times as many workers than fossil fuels in buildings.

This includes workers who replace old insulation in the attics of single-family bungalows and walls of two- and three-flats, fit new pipes for geothermal heating and cooling systems in commercial buildings, and install electric stoves and air source heat pumps in homes and buildings. Accelerating building decarbonization work in Chicago will grow this workforce by creating more clean energy jobs.

Building decarbonization is also good for consumers. According to a recent study, transitioning a single-family or individually metered multi-family home to all-electric heating will save over \$20,000 in twenty years with savings starting in the first year.

With the Inflation Reduction Act incentives creating an unprecedented opportunity for cities, states, and customers to advance clean energy and building retrofits, the time to act is now. The City of Chicago must pass the following:

Building Performance Standard (BPS) – As part of the National BPS Coalition, the City of Chicago has committed to proposing a BPS by Earth Day of 2024. In developing a BPS, Chicago should establish targets for reduced energy use and onsite greenhouse gas emissions for buildings over 25,000 sq/ft. and require that buildings meet the standard by 2040 with interim emissions reductions targets set in between.

Fossil Fuel Phase Out for New Construction - Adopt legislation requiring the phase-out of fossil fuels in all new residential and commercial buildings and major renovations of existing buildings by 2024.

We believe that equity must be considered as a foundational part of any successful Building Performance Standard (BPS) and new construction policy. As such, it is critical to prioritize the retrofitting of existing buildings, to prevent costs being passed down to tenants, and to maximize health, affordability, and workforce benefits for all of Chicago, especially frontline communities.

To meet the city's climate goals and create new job opportunities for Chicagoans, Chicago must pass these policies without delay.

Sincerely,

Company affiliation for identification purposes only

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