



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mario R. Mattera

## State Elected Officials Join With Local Officials, Labor Leaders And Energy Experts To Oppose All-Electric Construction Mandate

MARIO R. MATTERA March 25, 2022

| ISSUE: **ALL-ELECTRIC MANDATE, HARDWORKING MEN AND WOMEN OF LABOR, NATURAL GAS, NEW YORK STATE BUDGET**



Senator Mario R. Mattera (2<sup>nd</sup> Senate District), alongside his colleagues Senators Alexis Weik (3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District), Phil Boyle (4<sup>th</sup> Senate District) and Anthony Palumbo (1<sup>st</sup> Senate District), joined with Assemblymembers from across Suffolk County to express their collective opposition to the budget language that mandates that all new construction be all-electric beginning as soon as 2024. The state officials stood with local elected officials, labor

leaders and workers in front of the Town of Smithtown's Town Hall to show their united opposition to the plan, which is included in Governor Kathy Hochul's budget proposal.

Governor Hochul is moving forward with plans to ban clean burning natural gas and other mixed-use fuels from new buildings, including any that utilize oil or propane, despite protests from local residents, workers and lawmakers. According to Governor Hochul's proposal, by 2027, New York State would prohibit local governments from issuing permits for new buildings unless the building is powered and heated solely by electric power. A similar proposal by the Senate Democratic conference would ban the use of mixed-fuels in all new residential and commercial builds under seven stories in 2024 and all seven stories and above starting in 2027.

This change would disallow the use of natural gas, propane, or oil heaters, boilers, piping systems, fixtures or infrastructure installed to meet increasing building energy needs. This drastic change will stress the current infrastructure to its maximum without providing any insight into how the current electric grid will be able to handle the new workload. It will also have a dramatic impact on the fuel costs for residents and increase their household budget.

Most importantly, the rapid implementation of the ban would cause the loss of careers for many hardworking men and women across New York State. This loss of jobs following so closely to the damage inflicted upon our state by the COVID crisis will devastate many of our residents and will lead to further population loss as more and more New Yorkers will not be able to afford to stay.

Those who attended the press conference were united in their belief that any change of this magnitude should be done with public input.

“Everyone supports environmental protections but any steps toward that goal must also protect our residents and our workers. This hurried ban would cause great harm to every New Yorkers and result in the needless loss of jobs while over-taxing our already exhausted electric grid since our current infrastructure will be unable to keep up with demand. This ill-conceived mandate must be taken out of the state budget and voted on separately with a full discussion with all interested parties,” stated Senator Mattera.

“Provisions seeking to ban natural gas connections in New York State are perhaps the most dangerous proposals by Governor Hochul and her Democrat colleagues in the state legislature. Our state simply does not have enough electric capacity for what they are trying to do and, if we do not unite to fight their natural gas ban, New Yorkers will soon be experiencing power shortages the likes of which we have never seen,” stated Senator Boyle.

“We all want a cleaner future, but setting arbitrary deadlines to phase out reliable sources of energy before sufficient supply is available hurts our economy and threatens to cost us jobs when we need them most. Long Islanders work hard. This bill will make you pay more to heat your home and fuel your business. It’s the wrong time for us to be adopting extreme mandates that put our economy at risk,” stated Senator Weik.

"These proposals, if enacted, would prove disastrous for the housing industry and large sectors of our economy while doing little to incentivize the transition to renewable power. At a time of great economic uncertainty and rising energy costs, it would be prudent for the legislature to avoid passing any measure that will inevitably lead to higher fuel prices and job loss," added Senator Palumbo.

**“The goals as they are set in this budget are unrealistic and New York State needs to avoid a ready-fire-aim approach to state energy policy that will harm our residents. There is not a person at this press conference who doesn’t want to protect the environment for our region’s kids and grandkids. But we have seen the impact that these types of policies have had on our**

nation and we need to allow our residents to continue to utilize a diversified variety of energy, including clean, American-produced natural gas, so that they can heat their homes and live their lives,” stated Assemblyman Michael Fitzpatrick (8<sup>th</sup> Assembly District).

"Natural gas is a critical natural resource that helps fuel the U.S. economy," said Assemblyman Joe DeStefano (3rd Assembly District). "Banning it at any level would not only harm our economy and national security, but would also severely impact the financial well-being of all New Yorkers. Natural gas is a clean domestic energy source. Banning it would put our energy future in the hands of dictators and regimes that hate us and we must stand together as a rational nation to make sure that doesn't happen."

"Attempts to put a NYC-style gas ban in the state budget before the Climate Action Council even begins its work collecting public input on this matter underscores the extent to which this administration and local and state governments across the country are trying to move these policies under the radar. If the governor and majority leadership in the legislature were truly confident in the public support of natural gas ban policies, this issue would be debated openly and inclusively. If natural gas connections are successfully banned, it will be cost-prohibitive for consumers to simply undergo a renovation to their home, let alone build a new home, thereby reducing property values and building resiliency. Legislators in Albany are marching off a cliff and taking every New Yorker with them if a statewide ban on natural gas remains in the budget", stated Mark Valentini, Legislative Affairs Director for Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors—National Association.

"The Long Island Builders Institute, the largest residential trade association in New York State, continues to express its strong opposition to the movement to mandate electrification of all buildings under 7 stories without the necessary cost/benefit analysis to determine all of the ramifications of the mandate, including the cost and efficiency of its implementation to all of our residents," said Mitchell H. Pally, Chief Executive Officer. "This proposal only cares

about making headlines and does not care or take into account the needs of all of residents and businesses who already pay some of the highest electric rates in the country. Now is not the time for stunts, it is the time for a realistic and meaningful review of the impact of this and other mandates upon all of our residents.”

Local officials noted the impact this change will have on their ability to make the changes that those they represent need:

“Thank you to Senator Mattera for bringing everyone together to show our unified opposition to this mandate. While we all agree that we need to protect our environment, any changes must be done in a very rational and open way. We need to ensure that there is public input and a robust conversation about energy policy so that our entire state moves forward together. That will protect jobs, protect our economy and protect our environment and that must be everyone’s goal,” stated Town of Babylon Supervisor Richard Schaffer.

"The extreme mandates from Albany unnecessarily harm all New Yorkers, specifically small business owners. Rising gas prices over the past 15 months are the direct result of federal limits on our energy options. New York doesn't need to double down on that mistake," said Town of Huntington Supervisor Ed Smyth.

Union officials spoke about the impact a rushed implementation would have on their members and New York State’s energy sector:

“Natural gas continues to serve as a valuable component in the process of lowering carbon emissions for New York State,” said Matthew Aracich, president of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Nassau and Suffolk Counties. “Additionally, fuel cell technology can utilize natural gas and lower emissions another 38% without combustion. Natural gas as an industry represents many middle-class jobs right here on Long Island.

Furthermore, as we move towards a hydrogen energy future, we can use the existing infrastructure to responsibly and effectively transition away from fossil fuels.”

Patrick Guidice, Business Manager at International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1049 said, “We call on Governor Hochul to remove from the Senate’s Budget this hurtful plan which will hurt working families by eliminating natural gas.”

“I am speaking today for all the alternatives for a better source of energy for our state. But demanding one source and banning the ones that supply our Island now is not a viable option to many of our residents here and across the state. I am asking everyone to please contact your State Representatives to table the mandates that are in the budget and take a harder look on how we transition to the energy we all want for ourselves and the rest of the state,” added Danny Grodotzke representing Plumbers Local 200 and the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters over 400,000 journeyman and apprentices throughout the United States and Canada.

The deadline for an on-time 2022-23 State Budget is April 1.