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House of Representatives

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Ranking Member Cori Bush

Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs

Hearing on “Consumer Choice on the Backburner: Examining the Biden Administration’s Regulatory Assault on Americans’ Gas Stoves”

May 24, 2023

St. Louis and I are here today to discuss climate, the environment, and the very air we breathe—not just gas stoves.

I wish my Republican colleagues were as concerned about Black and brown communities on the frontlines of our climate crisis as they are about an appliance. **This proposed rule is not a ban on gas stoves. We are regulating indoor air pollution.** The climate crisis is happening all around us, and Republican inaction is costing us lives.

As lawmakers, we have a moral obligation to prioritize the health and well-being of every person across our country. There is a safe and effective alternative to a gas stove—but there is no viable alternative to taking action to save our planet.

I represent a community where the threat of climate pollution comes from both inside and outside our homes. In St. Louis City, Black children are twice as likely to test positive for lead in their blood than white children. St. Louis ranks among the highest across our country in rates of asthma, with rates significantly higher for Black residents than white residents.

I can only imagine the number of my constituents who are unknowingly being poisoned by their gas stove—especially young children, our elders, and people with disabilities—who are disproportionately at risk for contracting respiratory illnesses.

Let’s not forget that many of these gas stoves are not owned by the residents of the homes, but often absentee or corporate landlords. We have a number of housing regulations in place to ensure renters are kept safe, and indoor air pollution should be a top concern. This proposed rule is not a ban on gas stoves.

Research proves that improving the energy efficiency of gas stoves, and switching to electric stoves completely will save lives, money, and our environment. The Department of Energy estimates that the updated standards to improve gas stove energy efficiency will save consumers at least \$100 million; provide climate benefits of \$67 million; and health benefits of \$65 million each year.

Congress has an obligation to make smart and forward-thinking investments with taxpayer dollars to ensure our future generations are not plagued by illnesses that lawmakers can prevent today.

It's important to recognize that gas stoves perpetuate an unsustainable reliance on fossil fuels and can cause significant health issues. We know the Department of Energy's proposed rule and new efficiency standards will reduce both the negative climate and health impacts.

This Department of Energy policy would keep our communities safe, so it's no surprise the Republicans are against it. Republicans are consistently against regulations that maintain workplace safety standards, enact gun control to keep our children safe in schools, and allow access to reproductive care.

These standards are not a ban on gas stoves, but a way to move the nation forward and reduce the health and climate risks to people and our planet—while giving consumers more information and more options.

Gas stoves have long been linked to serious health hazards, especially in children who grow up in homes with gas stoves. According to the Scientific American, "scientists have long known that gas stoves emit pollutants that irritate human airways and can cause or exacerbate respiratory problems." We have the tools and the technology to address these issues definitively within the timeline DOE set forth. Three years to allow manufacturers to produce more energy efficient stoves is being generous.

The real work comes in communicating with folks at home and urging them to consider making the necessary changes to keep their households and families safe, and working with the Administration to ensure every family has access to safe, effective, and affordable appliances. This is not a ban on gas stoves.

As Ranking Member of this subcommittee, I know that work starts today. I implore my colleagues to join Democrats in the serious work of helping to keep our communities safe and informed—rather than partaking in the unserious work of sensationalizing safety standards by the DOE and misconstruing the science and facts.

Thank you, and I yield back.

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