

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 2, 2023

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

Dear Chairman Hoehn-Saric,

We write today with deep concern regarding Commissioner Trumka's recent comments¹ about regulating gas stoves. We have heard from many of our constituents who are now suddenly, and rightfully, concerned about the future of gas stoves.

We recognize you have attempted to dissuade these concerns through reassurances² that the Consumer Product Safety Commission (the Commission) is not considering a ban on gas stoves. While that is encouraging, we remain concerned about the Commission's goals and potential future action on this issue.

While a gas stove ban is not yet on the table, the lead up to one is. In October 2022, the Commission adopted an amendment to begin the process of a Request for Information (RFI) to "seek public input on hazards associated with gas stoves and propose solutions to those hazards."³

As you know, gas stoves are used in about 35 percent of households nationwide, nearly 40 million homes. The household figure in some states is closer to 70 percent.⁴ Natural gas stoves have been used for well over a century and have been proven to be both safe and efficient appliances.

We understand the Commission's mission is to ensure consumer safety. However, it is unclear what safety angle the Commission plans to take with the recent RFI.

If the Commission is concerned about the physical safety of consumers, the National Fire Protection Association has already proven that gas stoves pose a lower risk of cooking fires, deaths, and associated losses than other ranges.⁵

If the concern is about consumer health, neither the Commission nor the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has cited gas stoves as a significant contributor to adverse air quality or as a health

¹ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-01-09/us-safety-agency-to-consider-ban-on-gas-stoves-amid-health-fears>.

² <https://www.cpsc.gov/About-CPSC/Chairman/Alexander-Hoehn-Saric/Statement/Statement-of-Chair-Alexander-Hoehn-Saric-Regarding-Gas-Stoves>.

³ https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Commission-Meeting-Minutes-FY-2023-Operating-Plan_0.pdf?VersionId=wiJw89I902pxZ_6C.Zz08whJ616.9fo5.

⁴ <https://www.eia.gov/consumption/residential/data/2020/state/pdf/State%20Appliances.pdf>.

⁵ <https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/US-Fire-Problem/Home-Cooking-Fires>.

hazard. In fact, a 2013 study in the scientific journal *The Lancet* found “no evidence of an association between the use of gas as a cooking fuel and either asthma symptoms or asthma diagnosis.”⁶ Additionally, RMI manager Brady Seals said that the recently circulated study by the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*⁷ “does not assume or estimate a causal relationship” between childhood asthma and natural gas stoves.⁸

If the concern is about environmental health, the American Gas Association notes that residential natural gas accounts for only 4 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.⁹ Furthermore, greater use of natural gas benefits our environment. Increased natural gas use has contributed to significant carbon emission reductions in the United States over the past 15 years.¹⁰


Despite the aforementioned evidence negating the hazards of gas stoves on both consumers’ physical health and safety and the environment, we have seen reports indicating that your staff is still being directed to draft an RFI by March 1, 2023 regarding the “hazards associated with gas stoves and proposed solutions to those hazards.”¹¹

If this directive is still under consideration, please provide what event, peer reviewed research, or sudden new hazard has prompted this RFI since gas stoves have been in use for more than a century and studied for potential health hazards in the past.

In the event that the RFI is still moving forward, we urge that it be rescinded and that your office refrain from issuing a similar directive in the future.

Americans should be able to choose how to cook their food. Simply put, it is not the responsibility of the federal government to decide what kind of stove Americans can have in their kitchens. We appreciate your time and attention to this matter and look forward to receiving your response by February 24, 2023.

Sincerely,



James Lankford
United States Senator



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

CC:

Commissioner Peter A. Feldman
Commissioner Mary T. Boyle
Commissioner Richard L. Trumka Jr.

⁶ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24429203/>.

⁷ *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/20/1/75>.

⁸ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/energy-environment/what-to-know-gas-stove-study>.

⁹ <https://www.aga.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/aga-net-zero-emissions-opportunities-for-gas-utilities.pdf>.

¹⁰ <https://cresforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CRES-White-Paper-vol-1-US-Climate-Global-Emissions-Feb-4-2022-1.pdf>.

¹¹ www.epsc.gov/s3fs-public/FY2023CPSCOOperatingPlan.pdf?VersionId=Z.vZzSezwTIX224uG66J5fHTkFctvL.G.