

A Resolution Opposing Initiative 2066--Regulating energy services, including natural gas and electrification

Whereas, Initiative 2066 opposes a mandated and regulated long-term energy planning process for major combination (gas and electric) utilities in Washington State serving 500,000 customers or more based on HB 1589, passed by the Washington State Legislature in 2024, and

Whereas, Initiative 2066 misleads the public into fearing they will lose personal access to their gas appliances or be forced into expensive upgrades to electricity, which are untrue; and

Whereas, Puget Sound Energy, the state's largest utility with more than 1.2 million electric customers and 900,000 natural gas customers released the following statements concerning HB 1589, which would be overturned by the passage of I-2066:

“ HB 1589, passed by the state legislature in March 2024, is a planning bill. It will help PSE, under the supervision of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC), thoughtfully plan for the electric and natural gas choices of our customers consistent with our state's aggressive climate goals. There has been a lot of misinformation about HB 1589 as it changed over the course of two legislative sessions, from when it was first introduced in January 2023 to passage by the legislature in March 2024.

- HB 1589 does not include a ban on natural gas, and it does not change PSE's obligation to serve natural gas to our customers.
- There is no rate increase associated with HB 1589. It's a planning bill, and there will be three years of rulemaking and work before we submit an integrated system plan to our regulators. That will only be a plan—it will not include a request to increase rates.
- Nothing in the bill forces electrification. What it does is requires PSE to develop a scenario demonstrating the costs of electrification that will be part of the integrated system plan we submit to our regulators in 2027.¹

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Whereas, Initiative 2066 actually hurts consumers because it prevents gas/electric companies from planning, steering and incentivizing cleaner energy choices for builders and homeowners. If passed, I-2066 will take away communities' choice, jeopardize rebate programs that help families and small business owners afford building upgrades, repeal common-sense measures that make homes and workplaces more energy efficient and healthy, and erode clean air protections. Over time this measure will raise energy costs for hardworking Washingtonians.” (Caitlin Krenn, Climate and Clean Energy Director for Washington Conservation Action)² and

Whereas, Washingtonians understand the importance, now and in the future, of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, whereas I-2066 rolls back existing laws that keep our utilities on the path to clean energy.

Therefore, be it resolved, that First Legislative District Democrats endorse [“No on I-2066,”](#) and commit to defeating this initiative in November.

¹ *Puget Sound Energy*, "Facts about HB 1589," accessed August 26, 2024

² Krenn, Caitlin, Climate and Clean Energy Director for Washington Conservation Action, statement submitted to Ballotpedia: [Washington Initiative 2066, Natural Gas Policies Measure \(2024\) - Ballotpedia](#)

Submitted by Kathy Sharp

Approved by General Membership, Sept. 25, 2024