

Lawrence Hogan Jr.
Governor of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland, 21401-1925

Mary Beth Tung
Maryland Energy Administration Director
1800 Washington Blvd., Suite 755,
Baltimore, MD 21230

November 21, 2022

Dear Governor Hogan and Director Tung,

We're writing to urge you to withdraw your recently announced \$9.25 million grant program [for expanding methane gas infrastructure](#) across the state.

Using gas to heat our homes and businesses is bad for the environment and our health, and increasingly unaffordable in broad swaths of Maryland. Through energy efficiency, building electrification and thoughtful planning, we have an opportunity to improve the well-being and economic security of all Marylanders, but this investment in gas keeps us on the wrong path.

Many Marylanders have used methane gas (often known by the relatively innocuous term "natural gas") to heat their homes for more than a century. All that time, methane gas infrastructure has been [prone to leaks](#), endangering communities and the environment. Marylanders are all too familiar with dangers of gas after explosions in Montgomery County, Howard County, and Baltimore City have resulted in the loss of life, hospitalizations, loss of housing, and the closures of small businesses.

When people use methane for home heating and cooking, it produces [dangerous](#) levels of indoor air pollution. As a result, children living in homes where people cook meals with gas-powered appliances have a [42% higher chance](#) of experiencing asthma symptoms. Gas stoves also [contribute](#) more to climate change than previously thought because many of them continuously leak methane — [even when turned off](#).

Every dollar spent on expanding gas infrastructure is a dollar wasted long term, and contributes to the [ever-growing cost of gas](#). These grants to gas utilities are additionally misguided because gas utilities already have the ability to recover these costs from their customers — and they do, with surcharges on our bills and through increased rates. That's why you should pull the plug on this wrong-headed investment in gas.

Thanks to [federal incentives](#), the cost to electrify homes is increasingly within reach for Maryland homeowners. There's no justifying the outdated belief that gas is an acceptable way to power a building. It's time to transition to cleaner, safer electricity for our homes.

Therefore, our group of environmental, community and public health leaders urge you to cancel the program. Instead, this money should be spent to support a statewide shift in the power source for heating, cooking and cooling in our homes and buildings — from gas to electricity.

Sincerely,

Emily Scarr
Director
Maryland PIRG

Alice Wilkerson
Executive Director
Advance Maryland

Chris Parts
Member of the Board of
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**American Institute of
Architects - Maryland**

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