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<puc.filingcenter@puc.oregon.gov<mailto:puc.filingcenter@puc.oregon.gov>> Subject: NW Natural General Rate Case Comments cohenalicia@gmail.com<mailto:cohenalicia@gmail.com>.

Dear Chair Decker and Commissioners Tawney and Perkins, I am writing today as a long time climate and air quality advocate and founder of Woodsmoke Free PDX, now called Stop Burning Things PDX. First and foremost, I request that the Commission reject the utility's efforts to use rate payer dollars in support of their investments in false solutions, and mitigate risks to ratepayers from continued expansion of the gas system. Natural gas has a very significant climate impact and we need to stop using it as a foundational source of energy for our everyday lives. A reduction goal of ~85% of natural gas use in the next 5 years should guide policy. Natural Gas has a limited role to continue to play in our energy system. In Solana Beach, California the city banned use of gas in the major appliances that consume gas: water heaters and gas furnaces. However, natural gas in cooktops, fireplaces, and backyard firepits should continue to be permitted until another zero fossil-fuel or zero-climate-polluting option is available at scale (not so called renewable natural gas nor blue hydrogen). The logic is clear: cut out the vast majority of natural gas consumption in the short term without causing a major backlash from the public who prefers, for example, a gas cooktop. A reduction goal of ~85% of natural gas use in the next 5 years should guide policy. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts, Alicia Cohen, PhD. Founder, StopBurningThingsPDX Addendum, concerning relevant, likely consequences of a total gas ban: If all gas were to be banned the public will be pushed to increase wood burning for backup heating, as well as ornamental and lifestyle uses. Compared to gas—despite gas' very significant pollution impacts and the need we have as a society to stop using it as a foundational source of energy—wood burning has profoundly outsized pollution and human health impacts (see DEQ's infographic illustrating relative emissions of fine particulate matter for various heating devices) . With wood burning devices presently representing less than 1% of Multnomah County's heating mix yet contributing the majority of air pollution locally, one would hate to think what even a small increase in reliance on wood burning would do to public health and climate. The climate impact of wood burning is profound and has been largely ignored until recently—as we have come to understand that wood burning is very far from "climate neutral." Wood-biomass burning is the largest source of air pollution breathed daily by people all over the world, not only in Portland, and contains (among many other serious climate pollutants) very high levels of black soot, a super-intense climate forcer.