

Senate Bill 3: Banning Gas Stove - Article 2

https://www.thecentersquare.com/new_jersey/new-jersey-republicans-heat-up-debate-over-gas-stove-bans/article_b60fb28c-9b39-11ed-a916-8b15af129282.html

New Jersey Republicans heat up debate over gas stove bans

By Christian Wade

The Center Square contributor

Jan 23, 2023

(The Center Square) — New Jersey Republicans are seeking to block any efforts to ban gas stoves, as the state takes aggressive steps to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions.

A proposal filed by Senate GOP lawmakers would prohibit New Jersey from banning the sale, installation or operation of gas stoves and other appliances.

The bill's primary sponsor, Senate Minority Leader Steven Oroho, R-Sussex, said at a time when many New Jersey families are "struggling with soaring prices and inflation" the state government shouldn't be seeking to ban "affordable energy choices."

"We certainly don't need Democrats in our kitchens dictating how we cook our dinner," he said. "It's big government overreach that we need to stop."

To be sure, Gov. Phil Murphy hasn't called for a ban on gas stoves, but the state's clean energy blueprint calls for substantially reducing the state's greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, in part, by weaning homes and businesses off natural gas and other fossil fuels to keep the lights turned on and heat their homes.

Sen. Joe Pennacchio, R-Montville, suggests a ban on gas stoves and other appliances could be coming as the state endeavors to meet those benchmarks. He said Murphy's "expensive green energy plan would force New Jersey families and businesses to electrify everything, including their stoves, water heaters, and furnaces."

"Our bill would guarantee the right of New Jerseyans to use gas appliances and prevent state regulators from implementing any intrusive and expensive bans," Pennacchio said in a statement. "We're taking power back from the Trenton bureaucrats who want to control our lives."

The New Jersey proposal is the latest in the culture wars fight over gas stove bans, with states and the federal government weighing restrictions on the appliances as part of dual efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions and reduce childhood illnesses such as asthma.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and World Health Organization say gas-burning stoves are "unsafe" and linked to respiratory illness like asthma, cardiovascular problems, cancer, and other health ailments, especially when not used with proper ventilation. More than 40 million Americans use gas stoves, according to industry data.

So far, only California has taken steps to prohibit natural gas appliances by 2030 under new rules set in September by the state's Air Resources Board.

In New York, Gov. Kathy Hochul last week called on state lawmakers to set new requirements for buildings to have zero emissions and no gas stoves by 2028, and to ban the sale of new fossil-fuel-powered heating equipment by 2030. She cited a recent study which found gas stoves are responsible for 12.7% of childhood asthma cases nationwide.

If New York moves forward with a ban, the state would join California, which became the first state to seek to prohibit natural gas appliances after the California Air Resources Board unanimously approved a ban by 2030 in September.

In Congress, House Republicans filed a bill that would prohibit the Consumer Product Safety Commission from banning gas stoves after the federal agency suggested it was looking to restrict the household appliances to reduce health concerns.

"The Biden Administration's clear consideration to ban an appliance used by more than 40 million homes and 76 percent of restaurants is worse than Green New Deal-style regulation run amok," U.S. Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif. said in a statement. "It is a preposterous overreach of federal power that would deny Americans a necessary product they use every day."

CPSC Commissioner Richard Trumka Jr., told media outlets this week that gas stoves are a "hidden hazard" and suggested that "any option is on the table" from tougher emissions rules to a complete federal ban.

A group of House Democrats, including Sen. Cory Booker, D-NJ, recently wrote a letter urging the federal agency to take a closer look at regulating gas stoves, which they said pose a risk to consumers by causing "indoor air pollution."

The Democrats asked the agency to consider a requirement that gas stoves be sold with ventilation hoods, set standards related to gas leaks and dangerous emissions and labels to warn consumers about the "risk" of using gas stoves.