

Energy and Technology Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6848
AN ACT CONCERNING GAS LEAK DETECTORS IN NEW AND EXISTING
Title: CONSTRUCTION.
Vote Date: 3/14/2023
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/7/2023
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

[Rep. Mary Mushinsky, 85th District](#)

REASONS FOR BILL:

The Bill would require that all newly constructed buildings that use combustible gas are equipped with gas detectors and that all facilities which use combustible gas have sensors installed within two years after the effective date of the Bill. Using gas detectors in buildings will promote public safety, as gas leaks can harm or be fatal to occupants.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Marissa Gillett, Chairman, CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA)

Supports the Bill as it would allow for installing residential methane detectors (RMD) in residences with natural gas service, improving public safety. PURA also cites examples of similar legislation in Maine and New York that will require the installation of RMDs.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Samantha Dynowski, State Director, Sierra Club CT

Supports the Bill but recommends modifications to go further and prevent rather than only detecting gas leaks. They suggest that the Bill be amended to “require that all new and existing construction prohibit the use of gas appliances and equipment” and that new appliances sold in the state meet a zero-nitrogen oxide emission standard (Samantha Dynowski; Sierra Club CT Testimony; March 7, 2023).

Anne Schmidt, Group Leader, Citizens' Climate Education

Supports the Bill as it would improve the safety of residents. However, she recommends modification to "create a moratorium on natural gas infrastructure for new construction projects" (Anne Schmidt; Citizens' Climate Education Testimony; March 7, 2023).

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Roger Nelson, Connecticut Fire Marshals Association

Opposes the Bill due to concerns regarding the placement of detectors in residences, how many would be needed, and the battery life of the detectors, as their batteries would have a life of about five years and need to be hardwired with a backup. They note that it may be preferable to refer the Bill to the Public Safety and Security Committee as they have cognizance over fire safety and state building codes.

Oppose H.B. 6848:

Oppose the Bill as it would allow the legislature to amend the state building codes, which he does not believe would be beneficial for the state. There is already a thorough process to amend the codes, which would be a better way to implement the changes proposed in this Bill.

- Johnny Carrier, Vice President, By Carrier, Inc.
- Jim Perras, CEO, Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut, Inc.

Reported by: David deHaas

Date: 3/20/23