



March 9, 2021

Ms. Marilyn Toft  
Clerk, City of Toronto  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Dear Ms. Toft:

Re: MM28.21 - Calling on the Province to Phase-Out Gas-Fired Electricity Generation

Please distribute this letter to all members of Toronto City Council.

I am writing to you on behalf of For Our Kids Toronto – we are a network of parents fighting for a liveable future for all kids and we strongly support the motion “Calling on the Province to Phase-Out Gas-Fired Electricity Generation” (MM28.21) put forward by Councillor McKelvie and Councillor Layton urging the Province of Ontario to phase-out all gas-fired electricity generation as soon as possible.

We are facing a climate emergency and action this decade is crucial if we are to have a chance at limiting global warming in line with the Paris Agreement to preserve a liveable planet for our children. The Ontario government's plan to increase the number of gas-powered plants flies in the face of all reason and would be detrimental to the health and well-being of all Ontarians and all future generations.

We would like to remind councillors that they unanimously and rightly declared a climate emergency in 2019 and increased the City's 2050 emission reduction target to net-zero. How the electricity grid is powered matters in terms of moving to a zero carbon future as electricity powers many of the other sectors and is thankfully one where we have other cost effective options: principally renewable energies and job-creating retrofitting programs. The Province's plan to increase

the production of gas-fired power plants would make it impossible to achieve these goals and threatens the development of our emergent green economy.

We urge the councillors to think of the children in their own families and all children. What decision is in their best interest? The provincial government's plan to ramp up gas-fired power plants would increase their GHG emissions by 300% by 2030, and at least 400% by 2040. The air pollution caused by these emissions disproportionately impacts children and marginalized communities. Already, approximately 10,000 people die prematurely from air pollution every year in Canada<sup>1</sup> - to put in perspective; Covid-19 has tragically killed a total of approximately 22,000 and has been treated as an emergency. These negative externalities are not currently factored into the price of burning fossil fuels.

Our young people are increasingly anxious for their futures. A recent article in The Toronto Star mentions that students have club meetings to discuss their fears and whether they will be able to have children<sup>2</sup>. Youth are looking for adults to take action and protect their futures.

We therefore urge the City to join 13 other municipalities in voicing its firm opposition to any plan that calls for an increase in gas plants and its strong support for their phase-out - otherwise, a safer net-zero emissions future for the citizens of Toronto will be completely out of reach.

Sincerely,

Anne Keary and Brianne Whyte for For Our Kids Toronto

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<sup>1</sup>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/air-pollution-hurts-canadians-life-expectancy-says-ubc-study-1.5379634>

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2020/02/23/eco-anxiety-is-a-crushing-weight-for-many-young-canadians-and-they-say-schools-arent-doing-enough.html>