

24 February 2025

Members of the Rancho Santa Margarita City Council
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA
via Email



RE: OPPOSE Agenda Item #7.2 to protect the health of RSM residents

Dear Members of the City Council,

On behalf of Climate Action Campaign, we urge you to oppose Agenda Item #7.2, a resolution opposing South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rules 1111 and 1121. These rules represent a critical step forward in protecting public health by encouraging the transition from polluting gas appliances, such as furnaces and water heaters, to clean electric alternatives.

According to the American Lung Association, Orange County [has](#) some of the most dangerously polluted air in the United States, ranking worst among all 228 metropolitan areas for high ozone levels. These pollution levels remain unchanged since 1997. Ozone forms when nitrogen oxides (NOx) combine with volatile organic compounds in the presence of sunlight. Ozone and NOx pollution are linked to asthma, lung cancer, and cardiovascular diseases, contributing to 76,000 asthma attacks, 130 premature deaths, and \$2 billion in annual health costs.

The new regulations will significantly improve air quality and protect Rancho Santa Margarita residents by reducing exposure to harmful NOx emissions and ozone. **The American Lung Association supports Rules 1111 and 1121 for their vital health benefits.**

Moreover, numerous incentive programs are available to make the transition to electric appliances more affordable. The state's High-Efficiency Electric Home Rebate Act (HEEHRA) provides financial assistance ranging from \$4,000 to \$8,000 for installation costs, while South Coast AQMD's Go Zero program will offer \$1,500 in rebates for water heaters and heat pumps. [A study conducted by RMI](#) confirms that with existing incentives, electric appliances are cost-competitive with gas alternatives while delivering substantial public health benefits.

Additionally, this resolution is no longer relevant. During the [SCAQMD working group meeting](#) on February 13, staff introduced a revised regulatory framework that shifts compliance responsibility to appliance manufacturers rather than residents. The updated rule does not ban gas appliances, nor does it mandate an electrification transition—it is an entirely different policy than what this resolution opposes.

Finally, Rancho Santa Margarita deserves a resolution drafted for its residents, not one that has been copied and pasted from an industry lobbyist. Clearly, this resolution was not drafted for Rancho Santa Margarita residents.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to vote NO on Agenda Item #7.2. This is an opportunity to prioritize clean air, public health, and a sustainable future for our communities.

Sincerely,
David Martinez
Climate Action Campaign