

POSITION STATEMENT Regarding CNG and PSE's involvement in the Task Force 2/6/2019  
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I was asked to write this position statement by Clare Fogelson to share with the Task Force when I asked if we could discuss Cascade Natural Gas's involvement in the Task Force meetings.

It is scientifically proven that burning fossil fuels, and leaking of unburned natural gas into the environment is significantly affecting global climate change. Several informative articles from reputable sources specifically discussing natural gas are as follows:

- [Methane Eliminates Gas Production Benefits](#) - National Academy of Sciences
- [Climate Risks of Natural Gas](#) - Union of Concerned Scientists
- [Confronting the Myth - Gas is 'Safer' and 'Cleaner' than Other Fossil Fuels](#) - 350Seattle

Cascade Natural Gas (CNG) is a subsidiary of MDU Energy Capital LLC, which is a subsidiary of MDU Resources Group Inc., based in Bismarck North Dakota, with operations in 48 states. This for profit conglomerate has revenues of over \$4 billion annually. CNG serves approximately 282,000 customers in Washington and Oregon. [CNG Integrated Resource Plan](#) currently forecasts a 19.78% Load Growth (increase in gas consumption) for Bellingham by 2038 ([p. 39/227](#)). They have no intention of reducing gas sales in our area, as the IRP additionally shows a proposed LNG/I-5 Sumas Expansion Project in our region which references Bellingham as a service area that would benefit ([p. 56/227](#)). The IRP ([p. 86/227](#)) also states that CNG is engaging with the Task Force as much as possible to ensure their input is considered.

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) is currently owned by several Canadian and European institutional investment management funds. PSE serves approximately 1.1 million electricity customers and 790,000 natural gas customers in Washington. In 2017, nearly 60% of PSE's electricity was generated through coal fired and gas fired power plants.

The purpose of this position statement is two fold:

- 1) Help Task Force recognize why CNG should not participate in Task Force process
- 2) Help Task Force recognize CNG and PSE's conflict of interest with respect to Task Force's outcome

My concern with CNG attending and attempting to participate in Task Force meetings, stems from their inherent conflict of interest in supporting the Task Force's mandate. CNG opposed the City Of Bellingham's Resolution (attachment 1). PSE also opposed the resolution (attachment 2) (public comment by Lynn Murphy at 5/7/18 City Council Meeting, [minute 26:52](#) asking for an amendment to remove the 100% goals). Furthermore, once the resolution was passed, GNG and PSE sent a joint letter to request that both be placed on the Task Force (attachment 3).

There should be an inherent assumption that ALL parties involved with the Task Force, either officially as Task Force members, or unofficially as attendees offering support, will work together

in good faith to efficiently perform the mandate of the Task Force, and proactively work toward a successful conclusion, culminating with report offering potential solutions for reaching the 100% renewable goals set forth by the resolution.

With the support from PSE, CNG has inserted themselves into the Task Force's process and attempts to influence the Task Force's recommendations, whether through "volunteering" to provide information or analyses, commenting on proposed ideas during Task Force meetings, or "filling in" as a Task Force member, as was previously proposed by PSE's representative to allow CNG to provide expertise where PSE can't. It's imperative that we as a Task Force recognize the attempts to influence the outcomes of the Task Force's findings and recommendations for 100% clean energy options that meet the Resolution's goals.

Why should the Task Force, or the people of Bellingham who have entrusted the Task Force to fulfill the goals of the Resolution, trust any individuals or the fossil fuels corporations they represent who opposed the Resolution in the first place, to provide honest guidance toward the success of the Task Force, when they have already publicly opposed the Resolution in the first place? Why should the Task Force expect anything from CNG other than attempts to further their own corporate interests? Why does CNG have a representative in attendance and offering input, and why should the Task Force expect such input to be honest and useful toward Task Force success versus tainted by CNG's own interests? Because CNG and PSE have so much at stake should COB be successful in meeting the goals of the resolution, we must remember their bias. What we accomplish here can be duplicated by other cities.

PSE is on the Task Force and will share its concerns about affordability and feasibility which then can guide the Task Force to figure out other means of feasible and affordable outcomes. It's not PSE's job to tell the Task Force or the constituents it represents what is or isn't an affordable option. Also, PSE is just one member and should be considered as such with respect to representation in work groups. No one gets more spots on more work groups than the other members. It is not PSE's job to determine what options may or may not be feasible or define what feasible is...it is up to the Task Force to explore all possibilities and make recommendations.

I hereby move that CNG and its representatives (whether employees or otherwise) be formally removed from the process the Task Force is assigned to execute, and if CNG has comments they wish to provide they can do so via the public comment process, and not be allowed to interject or take part in ongoing Task Force meetings or processes.

As part of the process moving forward in moving to 100% clean energy, there will be major changes for all of us including both PSE and CNG, and the Task Force's mandate is to recommend how to do it. We need to recognize the forces at play here, and that is ok. This will be a challenge for all of us and our task is to go forward. This is not a statement to be divisive but rather an acknowledgement of our challenges ahead and we need to stay focused and positive toward reaching our objectives.