



Policy Resolution 05.2020

Adopted on September 29, 2020

Supporting Inclusive Energy Source Options for Consumers & Balanced Energy Solutions

Originating Sponsor

Senator Mark Allen, Oklahoma

Co-Sponsors

Senator Ken Yager, Tennessee

Representative Jim Gooch, Jr., Kentucky

WHEREAS, the threat of climate change requires an all-of-the-above approach utilizing all available energy solutions; and

WHEREAS, efforts to address climate change should identify on a fuel-neutral basis clean, flexible, reliable, versatile, and affordable energy sources that support the expansion of renewable and other energy technologies; and

WHEREAS, consumers should be empowered to make their own choices regarding the energy resources that best match their budget and lifestyle; and

WHEREAS, limiting the types of energy available to consumers and eliminating the right of citizens to choose how they want to power their homes and businesses is a costly and ineffective method of reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, Southern states experience some of the highest energy burdens— with low-income households using 36% more electricity than the national average, according to the U.S. Department of Energy; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy three of the five largest cities with the highest energy burden for consumers are in the South; and

WHEREAS, low-income, African American, Latino, and renters pay up to three times more than the average household on home energy costs; and

WHEREAS, high energy burdens can threaten a household's ability to pay for energy and force tough choices between paying energy bills and buying food, medicine, or other essentials; and

WHEREAS, over sixty municipalities across the country already have taken steps to limit the types of energy available to consumers; and

WHEREAS, local efforts to ban specific energy resources will upset uniform state energy policies, and the regulation of a utility provider's authority to operate and serve customers is a matter of statewide concern; and

WHEREAS, low-cost energy solutions, such as natural gas, are a critical foundation of affordable housing and keep consumer utility bills stable and affordable; and

WHEREAS, the states of Tennessee, Louisiana, and Oklahoma already have adopted legislation preserving consumer energy and ensuring affordable, balanced energy solutions.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Southern States Energy Board hereby declares our strong support empowering Southern consumers to make their own energy choices in order to achieve balanced energy solutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Southern States Energy Board recognizes that limiting the types of energy available to consumers is an inefficient method of combating climate change and serves to increase the energy burden on the most vulnerable segments of society; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Southern States Energy Board urges states to uphold the longstanding principle that the regulation of a utility provider's authority to operate and serve customers remains a matter of statewide concern; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Southern States Energy Board urges states to protect the right of consumers to choose the type of energy that meets their specific needs by ensuring that any code, ordinance, land use regulation or general or specific plan provision or part of a code, ordinance, land use regulation or general or specific plan provision adopted by a municipality does not prohibit or have the effect of restricting a person's or entity's ability to use the services of a utility provider that is capable and authorized to provide utility service at a person's or entity's property.

