



Tim Cawley  
 CEO and Chairman  
 Con Edison Corporation

November 1, 2023

Dear Mr. Cawley,

As organizations working toward a clean energy future in New York, often in partnership with Con Edison, we are writing to urge you to reconsider your membership with the American Gas Association (AGA), a trade association that has become a significant barrier to climate action, especially as it relates to cutting emissions from the building sector.

We recently learned that Eversource Energy, an investor-owned utility that sells both electricity and gas in the Northeast, has decided to end its membership with AGA, in order to “redirect costs to more targeted associations and memberships with a focus on decarbonization.” The decision recognizes the misalignment between Eversource’s own commitment to decarbonization and AGA’s use of membership dues to fight climate policies across the nation.

Given Con Edison’s leadership on decarbonization efforts in New York – including support of all-electric new construction and a commitment to avoiding gas system expansion – we urge you to do the same. By contributing more than \$800,000 every year to AGA, Con Edison is sending New Yorkers’ hard-earned dollars to an organization that is fighting the very policies that both Con Edison and New Yorkers support.

The actions of AGA do not align with Con Edison's values. AGA has been instrumental in undermining climate policy at the local, state, and federal level. AGA uses its members' dues to spread misinformation and fund front groups to fight the same electrification policies Con Edison has supported.

NPR [recently reported](#) on new evidence revealing AGA's awareness of the potential of gas stoves to cause respiratory illness, particularly in children, as early as the 1970s. But rather than warn the public or work to lower the health risks, AGA hired the same public relations firms and scientists that orchestrated Big Tobacco's disinformation campaign to sow confusion among the public and regulators about the health risks of gas cooking. AGA's actions restricted people's ability to keep themselves and their families safe in their homes, including Con Edison's own customers.

AGA also fights efficiency standards that will help save Americans money and cut pollution. They have led an effort to ban local governments in dozens of states from utilizing their authority to increase energy efficiency and upgrade buildings to cut pollution and ensure residents can withstand the impacts of climate change. While Con Edison has [lauded](#) Department of Energy's most recent efforts to improve furnace efficiency, [AGA has done the exact opposite](#), attacking standards that could save ratepayers money.

In light of AGA's actions, it is difficult to see how Con Edison can continue to meet its own climate commitments while financially contributing to the harmful actions of this trade association. How can you engage in good faith on climate solutions with your investors, customers and policymakers while also propping up a key barrier to those solutions?

Eversource's decision to leave AGA is proof that a major gas service provider can continue to safely and responsibly continue its operations without supporting climate obstruction by AGA. By shifting support to trade associations that are more aligned with Con Edison's values, as Eversource is doing, Con Edison can simultaneously provide safe energy service to residents of New York without undermining its own commitment to a healthier future.

We strongly urge Con Edison to leave the American Gas Association, and appreciate your consideration of this proposition. Leaving AGA would not only ensure that ratepayer dollars are not being misused, it would send a strong signal to other utilities that the era of climate obstructionism must end. We all must partner to help safeguard Americans from the devastating impacts of climate change.

Sincerely,

Andra Leimanis, program director, Alliance for a Green Economy (AGREE)

Howard M. Crystal, legal director, energy justice program, Center for Biological Diversity

Bob Cohen, policy and research director, Citizen Action of New York

Paul Kiesler, co-chair, The Climate Reality Project NYC Chapter

Meagan Burton, senior attorney, Earthjustice

Charles Harper, senior policy lead, Evergreen Action

Alex Beauchamp, northeast region director, Food & Water Watch

Ellen Weininger, director of educational outreach, Grassroots Environmental Education

Lucas Sanchez, co-director, New York Communities for Change

Christine Hoffer, executive director, New York Geothermal Energy Organization / NY-GEO

Sophie Campbell, executive director, New York Youth Climate Leaders

Anshul Gupta, senior policy analyst, New Yorkers for Clean Power

Jerry Rivers, environmental scientist, North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)

Iris Hiskey Arno, co-chair, environment committee, NYCD16 Indivisible

Tyson Slocum, energy program director, Public Citizen

Jill Loew, co-leader, Progressive Schenectady

Kim Fraczek, director, Sane Energy Project

David Alicea, Sierra Club

Susan Van Dolsen, co-founder, Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion

Andrew Engel, legislative team lead, Sunrise Movement NYC

Victoria Adler, co-founder, Queens Climate Project

Sara Gronim, co-leader, 350Brooklyn

Dorian Fulvio, steering committee member, 350NYC