Initiative 177: Constitutional Right to Purchase and Sell Natural Gas

Placed on the ballot by citizen initiative • Passes with 55 percent of the vote

Initiative 177 proposes amending the Colorado Constitution to:

- establish a constitutional right for consumers to purchase natural gas for cooking or heating; and
- establish a constitutional right for distributors and utilities to sell natural gas for use in homes and businesses.

What Your Vote Means

YES

A "yes" vote on Initiative 177 establishes a state constitutional right to purchase and sell natural gas for use in homes and businesses.

NO

A "no" vote on Initiative 177 maintains current law and regulations related to the purchase and sale of natural gas.

Summary and Analysis of Initiative 177

What is natural gas and how is it currently used in homes and businesses?

Natural gas is a fossil fuel comprised primarily of methane. It can be used to power appliances such as furnaces, water heaters, clothes dryers, stoves, and ovens for both residential and commercial properties. Other common household energy sources in Colorado include electricity and propane, which can be used to power these same appliances.

Does Colorado currently regulate natural gas for use in homes and businesses?

The state regulates investor-owned natural gas utilities through the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), including rates, safety, and clean heat plans. In December 2025, the PUC issued a rule requiring these utilities to submit plans for a 41 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035, compared to 2015 levels. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regulates air pollution and sets emissions standards for natural gas appliances.

Local governments may also regulate the installation and repair of natural gas service, delivery, pipelines, and appliances. Several municipalities in Colorado have restricted the installation of natural gas appliances in new construction or certain renovation projects. For example, the Town of Crested Butte recently updated its building code, requiring that new residential buildings use electricity for heating, hot water heaters, and other appliances.

Will the measure change natural gas laws in Colorado?

This measure will establish the right to purchase and sell natural gas for homes and businesses in the state constitution. By doing so, it may limit the ability for state or local governments to enforce existing or future regulations related to natural gas.

Arguments For Initiative 177

1) Natural gas is an affordable and widely available energy source that reliably heats homes and businesses, including during periods of extreme cold. Natural gas appliances are proven technologies, and most households in Colorado rely on natural gas as their primary heating source. This measure will ensure continued access to natural gas without interference from state or local governments.

Arguments Against Initiative 177

1) Using natural gas contributes to climate change through emitting greenhouse gases, leads to air pollution, and should not be protected in the state constitution. Doing so limits efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and adopt more sustainable options, such as wind, solar, and geothermal energy. Local communities should have the ability to make decisions about public health priorities, energy needs, and climate goals.

Information about the organizations supporting and opposing this measure is available on the Colorado Secretary of State's website:

www.coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/Initiatives/ballot/contacts/2026.html

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Fiscal Impact of Initiative 177

State Spending

The measure may minimally increase expenditures for state agencies, primarily the Department of Local Affairs, to revise technical assistance to local governments concerning building codes that conflict with the right to purchase or sell natural gas. The measure may also increase workload and legal services for state agencies that regulate or monitor emissions from natural gas utilities or intervene in those cases, including the Public Utilities Commission, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Public Health and Environment, and the Colorado Energy Office.

Local Government Spending

Local governments that currently have or are considering building codes that regulate, prohibit or restrict natural gas in commercial and residential development may have increased legal services and costs to conform the codes with state law, and to modify permitting, inspection, and compliance activities.