



Legislation Summary:

An Act relative to the future of heat in the Commonwealth

Bill number(s): [H.3298/S.2148](#) (Bill numbers will change as legislation proceeds.)

Sponsors: Rep. Lori Ehrlich and Sen. Cynthia Creem

Purpose of the bill:

The Future of Heat allows gas utilities to become renewable, clean energy utilities using networked geothermal heat. Gas companies are currently piloting demonstration installations of a decarbonized infrastructure – networked geothermal distribution.

Brief description of what the bill does.

This bill moves the proven technology of geothermal heating and cooling from the pilot stage to utility scale implementation, reducing the physical, financial and climate risks of our current system while encouraging an equitable transition of the gas utility into a renewable thermal energy utility.

The Future of Heat Act provides a plan to balance financial and gas system safety risks. It redirects investment to modern infrastructure that can provide safe, reliable, clean and affordable heat long into the future, sustainably and equitably.

A Just Transition to Clean Heat:

- Allows gas companies to deliver renewable thermal energy to our homes, not just gas.
- Allows gas companies to replace leaky gas pipes with modern renewable thermal pipes.
- Incentivizes gas companies to make long term repairs rather than expensive replacement of old pipes.
- Mandates that cost of new fossil fuel infrastructure cannot be billed to ratepayers past 2050.
- Requires gas companies to add more renewable thermal energy each year, moving our gas system and its workers towards a modern energy system with safe jobs.
- Requires that the DPU consider impacts on public health in its decision-making.

Financing the Transition to Clean Heat:

- Authorizes pipeline replacement funds to be used for non-emitting renewable energy infrastructure.
- Authorizes securitization*1 financing for geothermal or other non-emitting renewable thermal technology.
- Assesses per therm charge to fund renewable energy programs as well as energy innovation.



Jobs and Equity Considerations for a Just Transition:

- Assists customers in replacing appliances and upgrading buildings in order to make the transition from gas to renewable thermal energy accessible to all.
- Prohibits landlords from passing on to tenants any costs for which landlords have been reimbursed.
- Provides training for gas workers to transition to comparable clean heat jobs.

LWVUS position that allows support of this bill:

2020-2022 Impact on Issues: p. 93

“In 2008, the League called on Congress to enact legislation to significantly cut the greenhouse gas emissions which cause global climate change and supported increased energy efficiency and a shift to a clean, renewable energy. The League called for a moratorium on the building of new coal-fired electric power plants and supported requirements for utilities to produce a significant percentage of electricity from renewable resources

Additional Information and Fact Sheet

[BuroHappold Engineering Feasibility Study](#), July 2019

[Fact Sheet](#) (courtesy of Gas Leaks Allies)

