

**BEFORE THE NEW MEXICO PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION )  
OF NEW MEXICO GAS COMPANY, INC. )  
FOR APPROVAL OF ITS 2023-2025 ENERGY )  
EFFICIENCY PROGRAM PURSUANT TO )  
THE NEW MEXICO PUBLIC UTILITY AND )  
ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACTS )**

**Case No. 22-00232-UT**

**DIRECT TESTIMONY**

**ON BEHALF OF THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

**PART 2 – KENJI TAKAHASHI**

**NOVEMBER 30, 2022**

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1    **1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY**

2    **Q     Please state your name and occupation.**

3    **A     My name is Kenji Takahashi. I am a Senior Associate at Synapse Energy**  
4           Economics, Inc. (“Synapse”). My business address is 485 Massachusetts Avenue,  
5           Suite 3, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.

6    **Q     Please summarize your work experience and educational background.**

7    **A     At Synapse, I conduct economic, environmental, and policy analysis of energy**  
8           system technologies, planning and regulations associated with both supply- and  
9           demand-side resources. Over the past 18 years, I have assessed the design, impact,  
10          and potential of energy efficiency and distributed energy resources policies and  
11          programs in over 40 jurisdictions across North America for a variety of clients.  
12          These include: environmental groups; municipal, state, and provincial  
13          governments; and federal agencies such as U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
14          and U.S. Department of Energy.

15          Another area of my focus has been technological, resource, economic, and policy  
16          assessments of building decarbonization and its impact on gas system planning. I  
17          have assessed the potential of building decarbonization for several states  
18          including Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, New York, Maryland, and  
19          California and for several regions including the Northeast and the Southwest. For  
20          Massachusetts, I assessed the potential of natural gas demand savings measures  
21          and electrification measures as solutions to the gas moratorium placed by  
22          Berkshire Gas company, and I testified before the Massachusetts Department of  
23          Public Utilities on the matter. For the Southwest, I assisted the Southwest Energy

1 Efficiency Partnership (SWEEP) as the technical advisor for its analysis of the  
2 economics of residential building decarbonization back in 2018.

3 I hold a Master's in Urban Affairs and Public Policy with a concentration in  
4 Energy and Environmental Policy from the Biden School of Public Policy and  
5 Administration at the University of Delaware. I also recently completed the  
6 Massachusetts Institute of Technology's online program "Sustainable  
7 Infrastructure Systems: Planning and Operations."

8 A copy of my current resume is attached in Appendix A.

9 **Q On whose behalf are you testifying in this case?**

10 **A** I am testifying on behalf of the NMAG.

11 **Q Have you previously testified in regulatory proceedings in New Mexico?**

12 **A** No.

13 **Q Have you testified on a similar topic before a state or provincial commission**  
14 **in other jurisdictions?**

15 **A** Yes. I have testified regarding energy efficiency program assessments before the  
16 New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, the Massachusetts Department of Public  
17 Utilities, and the Ontario Energy Board.

18 **Q What is the purpose of your testimony in this proceeding?**

19 **A** NMAG retained Synapse to review the New Mexico Gas Company ("NMGC" or  
20 "Company") Application for approval of its 2023–2025 Energy Efficiency  
21 Program ("2023–2025 EEP") and provide recommendations to the New Mexico

1           Public Regulation Commission (“NMPRC” or “Commission”). To this end, I  
2           reviewed the 2023–2025 EEP and assessed whether it is in the interest of the  
3           residential and small business customers of NMGC and in the public interest of  
4           the state of New Mexico. The purpose of my testimony is to provide a summary  
5           of key issues with the 2023–2025 EEP and recommendations for improvement.

6    **Q     How is this testimony structured?**

7    **A**My testimony is focused on gas-fueled water- and space-heating equipment  
8           investments, which I discuss in Section 2.

9    **Q     What documents do you rely upon for your analysis, findings, and**  
10           **observations?**

11   **A**The sources for this testimony are the 2023–2025 EEP, annual reports  
12           summarizing 2019, 2020, and 2021 spending and performance, NMGC’s 2020–  
13           2022 EEP, NMGC’s responses to discovery requests, and my personal knowledge  
14           and experience with energy efficiency programs in other jurisdictions. I have  
15           submitted additional discovery to NMGC and I note topic areas throughout this  
16           testimony on which I have asked the Company additional questions. NMAG  
17           hopes to be granted leave to supplement this testimony based on the Company’s  
18           responses.

19   **2. GAS-FUELED EQUIPMENT INVESTMENTS**

20   **Q     How much of the total proposed funding is allocated to gas-fueled water- and**  
21           **space-heating equipment replacements (including gas-fueled furnaces and**

1        **boilers, gas-fueled storage water heaters, and gas-fueled tankless water**  
2        **heaters)?**

3        The Company's 2023–2025 EEP provides incomplete information about the  
4        amount of funding dedicated to gas-fueled water- and space-heating equipment  
5        replacements in all programs. The Water Heating and Space Heating programs  
6        have a clear focus on these measures, so I focus my attention on these programs to  
7        start. The Water Heating program is focused on replacing gas-fueled water heaters  
8        with gas-fueled storage water heaters and gas-fueled tankless water heaters. The  
9        Space Heating program is focused on replacing gas-fueled heating systems with  
10       gas-fueled furnaces and boilers. Exhibit SLC-5 in the 2023–2025 EEP and the  
11       Company's benefit-cost model (Appendix B) break out the share of rebates  
12       dedicated to gas-fueled water- and space-heating equipment replacements within  
13       these two programs and the rebate costs.

14       The Company plans to provide 605 rebates for gas-fueled water-heating  
15       equipment replacements annually under the Water Heating program. The budget  
16       for these rebates is 51 percent of the total rebates for this program. If we apply  
17       this percentage to the average annual program budget of \$1.2 million, the budget  
18       dedicated to water-heating equipment would be approximately \$629,000.<sup>1</sup> The  
19       Company plans to provide 310 rebates for gas-fueled space-heating equipment  
20       replacements annually under the Space Heating program. The budget for these  
21       rebates is 47 percent of the total rebates for this program. Applying this  
22       percentage to the average annual program budget of \$1.2 million, the budget  
23       dedicated to water-heating equipment would be approximately \$550,000.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> According to Exhibit SLC-5, the other measures include showerheads and gas-fueled dryers.

<sup>2</sup> According to Exhibit SLC-5, the other measures include smart thermostats, insulation, duct sealing, and furnace tune-ups.

1        Other programs such as the Income Qualified, Multi-Family, and Efficient  
2        Buildings programs may also include incentives for gas-fueled water- and space-  
3        heating equipment replacements. However, the Company does not provide a  
4        breakout of the measures and associated incentive amounts for these programs in  
5        Exhibit SLC-5 or the benefit-cost model (Appendix B). I am confirming the total  
6        number of rebates for water- and space-heating equipment annually and the total  
7        costs through discovery with NMGC. In the meantime, I estimate that NMGC  
8        proposes to invest *at least* \$1.2 million annually in gas-fueled water- and space-  
9        heating equipment replacements out of its nearly \$15 million budget, equivalent  
10       to 8 percent.

11    **Q        Is the proposed funding for gas-fueled equipment appropriate?**

12    **A** No. The Company's proposal to support the installation of new gas-fueled  
13       equipment is not aligned with New Mexico's climate policy. In fact, I expect such  
14       a proposal is counter to the state's climate policies and would make it harder to  
15       achieve the state's greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) targets. This is because  
16       equipment incentives have the effect of locking existing customers into continued  
17       use of gas for several decades, which leads to continuing GHG emissions from the  
18       building sector. Also, customers who participate in the proposed programs will be  
19       exposed to further risks of high gas prices and price volatility, as discussed further  
20       along in my testimony.

21    **Q        Please explain the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.**

22    **A** New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham issued Executive Order 2019-  
23       003 "Executive Order on Addressing Climate Change and Energy Waste  
24       Prevention" in January 2019. This Executive order established a statewide GHG  
25       emission reduction target of at least 45 percent by 2030, based on 2005 levels.

1 According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), gas  
2 consumption in the state increased by about 9 percent between 2005 and 2021.<sup>3</sup>  
3 Assuming the gas companies are equally responsible for achieving the GHG  
4 emissions reduction goal, the gas companies in the state need to reduce GHG  
5 emissions from their customers' gas use by 50 percent by 2030.

6 **Q Please elaborate on how the Company's proposed gas-fueled water- and**  
7 **space-heating replacement investments in the 2023–2025 EEP hinders**  
8 **achievement of the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.**

9 **A** Space- and water-heating systems have long measure lives. The Company  
10 assumes that water heaters last 15 to 20 years and furnaces and boilers last 18 to  
11 20 years. These long measure lives suggest that once customers install new gas-  
12 fueled water- and space-heating systems using the Company's rebates, these  
13 systems will be in use for the next 15 years or more. For many customers, utilities  
14 are trusted voices regarding building equipment choices, and regulatory approval  
15 of their programs implies that customers can trust that the utility's programs are  
16 consistent with state policy. Instead of being consistent with policy, these  
17 incentives will make it more difficult for New Mexico to achieve its 2030 GHG  
18 emission reduction goal because they will lock in some GHG emissions for a long  
19 period of time. A shift in investments from more polluting options to less  
20 polluting options during this three-year plan cycle would better enable New  
21 Mexico to achieve its 2030 GHG emission reduction goal.

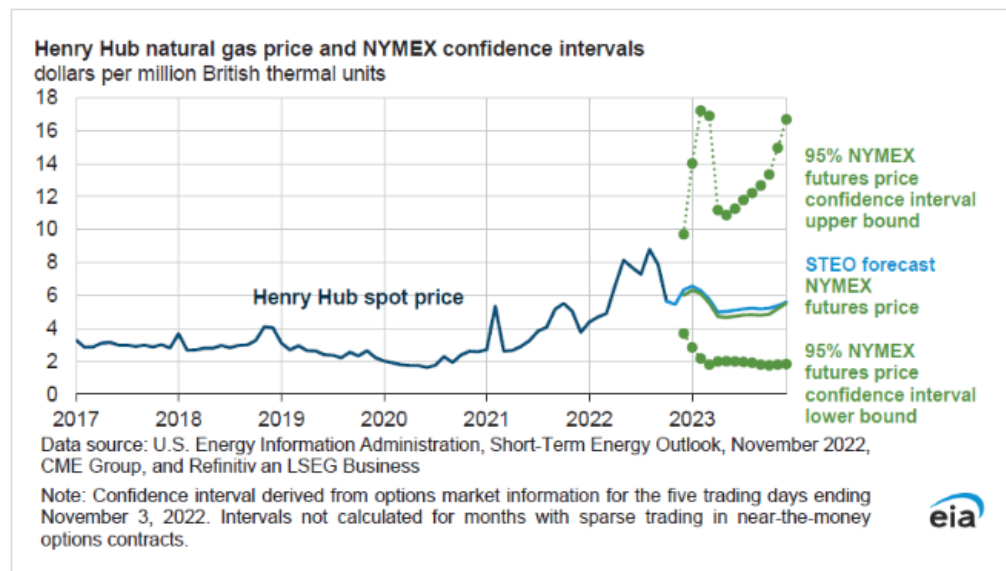
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<sup>3</sup> EIA. "Natural Gas Consumption by End Use." Available at:  
[https://www.eia.gov/dnav/ng/ng\\_cons\\_sum\\_dcu\\_SNM\\_a.htm](https://www.eia.gov/dnav/ng/ng_cons_sum_dcu_SNM_a.htm)

1     **Q     Please elaborate on how the Company’s proposed 2023–2025 EEP gas-fueled**  
2     **water- and space-heating equipment replacement incentives will expose**  
3     **customers to further risks of high gas prices and price volatility.**

4     **A     Gas prices have increased dramatically over the past few years globally and in the**  
5     United States, primarily due to global gas supply constraints that were triggered  
6     by substantially reduced gas supply from Russia to the European market. Figure 1  
7     shows the EIA’s Short-Term Energy Outlook (STEO), which includes historical  
8     gas prices since 2017 along with STEO’s gas forecast and NYMEX futures gas  
9     prices through 2024.

10    **Figure 1. Historical and Projected Natural Gas Prices and NYMEX Future Gas Prices**



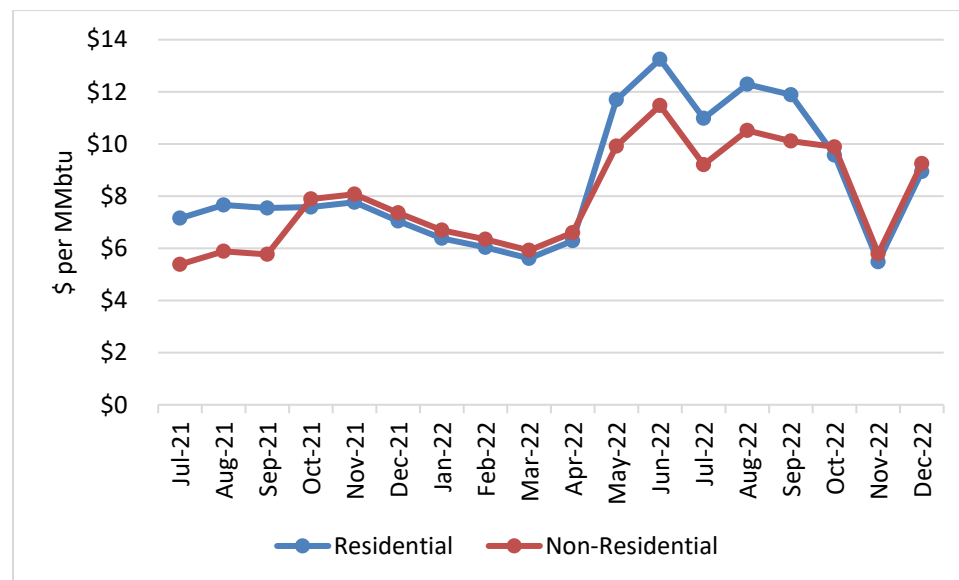
11  
12    Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration. 2022. *Short-Term Energy Outlook*, page 7.  
13    Available at: [https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/steo/pdf/steo\\_full.pdf](https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/steo/pdf/steo_full.pdf).

14    This figure shows that historical gas commodity prices at Henry Hub were  
15    between \$2 and \$4 per million British thermal units (MMBtu) from 2017 through  
16    2020. Gas prices started to increase from the beginning of 2021 to as high as \$8  
17    per MMBtu in mid-2022, approximately 3 to 4 times higher than the previous

1 levels. During this time, prices were more volatile as well. Gas prices declined  
2 slightly in the fall of 2022 but are still around \$6 per MMBtu. While EIA's short-  
3 term price forecasts (shown as STEO forecast in the figure) and NYMEX futures  
4 prices are slightly lower than the current gas prices, they are still substantially  
5 higher than levels seen in the last half-decade.

6 These price increases are affecting all households and businesses using gas in  
7 New Mexico. Figure 2 presents monthly gas commodity prices for residential and  
8 non-residential customers served by the New Mexico Gas Company since July  
9 2021. The price trends are similar to the prices at Henry Hub presented above.

10 **Figure 2. Gas Commodity Prices for New Mexico Gas Company's Customers**



11  
12 *Source: New Mexico Gas Company. "Cost of Gas." Available at:*  
13 [https://www.nmgco.com/en/cost\\_of\\_gas](https://www.nmgco.com/en/cost_of_gas)

14 As shown in **Figure 2** above gas commodity prices roughly tripled in 2022 when  
15 compared to 2020. Given that NMGC gas  
16 distribution and transmission costs (which are not affected by the fluctuations in  
17 gas commodity prices) are about \$2.3 per MMBtu, I estimate that all-in gas prices

1 including commodity prices and transmission and distribution charges may have  
2 doubled since 2020. This implies that gas bills are now roughly twice what they  
3 used to be.

4 According to EIA, the average residential customer in NMGC's jurisdiction paid  
5 \$420 for natural gas in 2020 and \$575 in 2021.<sup>4</sup> These estimates include monthly  
6 customer charges. NMGC customer charges are currently \$12 per month for  
7 residential customers, or \$144 per year.<sup>5</sup> Assuming the same customer charges for  
8 2020 and 2021, the annual gas costs excluding customer bills would have been  
9 \$276 in 2020 and \$431 in 2021. Further assuming that the annual gas costs in  
10 2022 excluding customer charges would be twice as high as the costs in 2020 (or  
11 \$552), the total annual gas bill including the customer charges would be about  
12 \$696 (\$552 + \$144), representing about 66 percent increase from the bills in  
13 2020. While more efficient gas-fueled equipment will reduce the exposure to such  
14 gas price hikes and volatility, this savings is smaller than it could be. For  
15 example, an efficient gas-fueled furnace is typically about 95 percent efficient  
16 while a standard gas-fueled furnace may be about 80 percent efficient. The energy  
17 savings from the efficient gas-fueled furnace is about 16 percent relative to the  
18 standard gas-fueled furnace. This means that a consumer who purchases an  
19 efficient gas-fueled furnace will be still exposed to most of the high gas prices and  
20 price volatility.

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. EIA. 2022. "Natural Gas Annual Respondent Query System (EIA-176 Data through 2021)" Report: 176 Type of Operations and Sector Items. Available at:

<https://www.eia.gov/naturalgas/ngqs/#?report=RP4&year1=2018&year2=2021&company=Name>

<sup>5</sup> New Mexico Gas Company. 2020. Fourth Revised Rate No. 10. Canceling Third Revised Rate No. 10 – Residential Service. Available at:

<https://www.nmgco.com/userfiles/files/Rate%20No.%2010%20PDF%20Residential%20Services.pdf>.

1     **Q**     **Is there a better alternative to gas-fueled water-heating and space-heating**  
2             **equipment?**

3     **A**     Yes. A better alternative to gas-fueled equipment for water and space heating is  
4             electric heat pumps and heat pump water heaters. Electric heat pumps have  
5             superior energy efficiency over any other type of heating systems and offer the  
6             potential to fully decarbonize water- and space-heating end uses in buildings.  
7             Heat pumps can also provide space cooling. Heat pumps are cost-effective  
8             relative to gas-fueled heating systems in both new and existing buildings. With  
9             the current high gas prices and electric prices that have increased to a lesser extent  
10            than gas prices,<sup>6</sup> heat pumps are now even more cost-effective.

11    **Q**     **Please elaborate on the performance of electric heat pumps.**

12    **A**     On average, efficiencies of electric heat pumps including electric heat pump water  
13             heaters typically exceed 250 percent (also expressed as coefficient of performance  
14             or COP greater than 2.5). Heat pumps can achieve this level of high performance  
15             because they move heat from one place to another using a vapor-compression  
16             refrigerant cycle, instead of combustion. While heat pump performance for space  
17             heating declines as the temperature declines, heat pumps designed for cold  
18             climates (often called cold climate heat pumps) are now widely available in the  
19             market and can comfortably and efficiently heat space at temperatures that are  
20             significantly below zero. For example, one field study from Vermont observed  
21             that cold climate heat pumps achieved 160 percent efficiency at 5°F and operated

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<sup>6</sup> U.S. EIA. “Average retail price of electricity, monthly” for New Mexico, available at:  
<https://www.eia.gov/electricity/data/browser/#/topic/7?agg=0,1&geo=000000000001&endsec=vg&freq=M&start=200101&end=202208&ctype=linechart&ltype=pin&rtype=s&pin=&rse=0&maptype=0>.

1 at above 100 percent efficiency even below -20°F.<sup>7</sup> Heat pump water heater  
2 performance is not dependent on the outside temperature.

3 All the counties in New Mexico have a design temperature above 0°F.<sup>8</sup> (The  
4 design temperature represents the lowest temperature recommended for  
5 consideration when designing the size of a heating system.) This means that cold  
6 climate heat pumps can fully replace gas-fueled water- and space-heating systems  
7 without any technical issues across New Mexico and reduce 100 percent of gas  
8 consumption for these end uses. On the other hand, an efficient gas-fueled furnace  
9 would only save about 16 percent of the gas consumption.

10 **Q Please elaborate on how heat pumps can fully decarbonize space and water**  
11 **heating end uses.**

12 **A** Heat pumps will enable the building sector to fully decarbonize water and space  
13 heating end uses when the grid is powered by 100 percent clean energy in the  
14 state. It is notable that a 2022 study conducted by the Southwest Energy  
15 Efficiency Partnership (SWEET) estimated that heat pumps for space heating  
16 installed today in New Mexico are expected to reduce the emissions relative to  
17 gas by 58 to 64 percent over the life of the heat pumps. This analysis considers (a)  
18 projected grid emission rates for New Mexico based on the National Renewable

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<sup>7</sup> Walczyk, J. 2017. *Evaluation of Cold Climate Heat Pumps in Vermont*. Prepared by The Cadmus Group, LLC for the Vermont Public Service Department. Available at: [https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Energy\\_Efficiency/Reports/Evaluation%20of%20Cold%20Climate%20Heat%20Pumps%20in%20Vermont.pdf](https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Energy_Efficiency/Reports/Evaluation%20of%20Cold%20Climate%20Heat%20Pumps%20in%20Vermont.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> U.S. EPA. *ENERGY STAR Certified Homes County-Level Design Temperature Reference Guide*. Available at: [https://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/bldrs\\_lenders\\_raters/downloads/County%20Level%20Design%20Temperature%20Reference%20Guide%20-%202015-06-24.pdf](https://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/bldrs_lenders_raters/downloads/County%20Level%20Design%20Temperature%20Reference%20Guide%20-%202015-06-24.pdf).

1 Energy Laboratory's (NREL) Cambium model and (b) a conservative methane  
2 leak rate from natural gas systems.<sup>9</sup>

3 **Q Please discuss the economics of heat pumps relative to gas-fueled water- and**  
4 **space-heating equipment.**

5 **A** The 2022 SWEEP study also estimated the cost-effectiveness of heat pumps  
6 relative to gas-fueled furnaces for new construction and existing residential  
7 buildings in warmer cities and colder cities in a few Southwestern states,  
8 including New Mexico. Table 1 presents SWEEP's analysis for the warmer cities.  
9 The operating costs for heat pumps are generally lower than the operating costs of  
10 gas-fueled furnaces. Even with the incremental installation cost of a heat pump,  
11 heat pumps have better lifecycle economics in three cities on a life-cycle cost  
12 basis, ranging from \$252 savings for a new home in Las Vegas, Nevada to \$1,055  
13 savings for an existing home in Tucson, Arizona. In Las Cruces, the life cycle  
14 costs of heat pumps are more than gas-fueled furnaces (by \$435 to \$472). The  
15 primary reason for the unfavorable economics of heat pumps for Las Cruces is a  
16 combination of (a) a relatively higher electricity-to-gas price ratio among the  
17 selected cities and (b) the highest heating demand among the selected cities.  
18 While SWEEP finds that it is cheaper to operate a heat pump in Las Cruces than  
19 to use a gas-fueled furnace, the operating savings are not enough to overcome an  
20 upfront cost premium.

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<sup>9</sup> SWEEP. 2022. *Benefits of heat pumps for Southwest homes*. Table 8 on page 22 and Table 9 on page 23.  
Available at: <https://swenergy.org/pubs/southwest-heat-pump-study-2022>.

**Table 1. SWEEP's Analysis of the Economics Heat Pumps in Warmer Southwestern Cities**

| City and Scenario         | Gas-Fueled Furnace        | Heat Pump                 | Heat Pump Incremental Installation Costs (\$) | Total Incremental Life-Cycle Costs |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
|                           | NPV of Heating Costs (\$) | NPV of Heating Costs (\$) |   |                                    |
| New Home                  |                           |                           |   |                                    |
| Phoenix, AZ               | \$3,221                   | \$1,914                   | \$1,000                                       | (\$306)                            |
| Tucson, AZ                | \$4,883                   | \$3,022                   | \$1,000                                       | (\$861)                            |
| Las Vegas, NV             | \$3,694                   | \$2,441                   | \$1,000                                       | (\$252)                            |
| Las Cruces, NM            | \$4,591                   | \$4,026                   | \$1,000                                       | \$435                              |
| Retrofit of Existing Home |                           |                           |   |                                    |
| Phoenix, AZ               | \$3,726                   | \$2,256                   | \$1,000                                       | (\$469)                            |
| Tucson, AZ                | \$5,502                   | \$3,448                   | \$1,000                                       | (\$1,055)                          |
| Las Vegas, NV             | \$4,239                   | \$2,823                   | \$1,000                                       | (\$416)                            |
| Las Cruces, NM            | \$5,154                   | \$4,626                   | \$1,000                                       | \$472                              |

Source: SWEEP. 2022. *Benefits of heat pumps for Southwest homes. Table 10.*

Table 2 summarizes SWEEP's analysis of the economics of heat pumps in two cities in New Mexico. As shown in this table, the economics are worse for Albuquerque than for Las Cruces. This is partly because SWEEP assumes a cold climate heat pump, which is more expensive, for Albuquerque and other colder cities. The operating cost savings of the heat pump again cannot overcome this higher upfront cost.

**Table 2. SWEEP's Analysis of the Economics Heat Pumps in Two Cities in New Mexico**

| City and Scenario         | Gas-Fueled Furnace        | Heat Pump                 | Heat Pump Incremental Installation Costs (\$) | Total Incremental Life-Cycle Costs |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
|                           | NPV of Heating Costs (\$) | NPV of Heating Costs (\$) |   |                                    |
| New Home                  |                           |                           |   |                                    |
| Las Cruces, NM            | \$4,591                   | \$4,026                   | \$1,000                                       | \$435                              |
| Albuquerque, NM           | \$7,107                   | \$6,595                   | \$3,200                                       | \$2,688                            |
| Retrofit of Existing Home |                           |                           |   |                                    |
| Las Cruces, NM            | \$5,154                   | \$4,626                   | \$1,000                                       | \$472                              |
| Albuquerque, NM           | \$7,960                   | \$7,772                   | \$1,800                                       | \$1,591                            |

*Source: SWEEP. 2022. Benefits of heat pumps for Southwest homes. Table 10 and 11.*

**Q What gas prices were used in the SWEEP analysis?**

**A** The SWEEP study used gas prices of about \$0.93 per therm for Albuquerque and \$0.80 for Las Cruces.

**Q How would today's higher gas prices impact these results?**

**A** One major sensitivity factor that could change the economics of heat pumps is energy prices, in particular gas prices. As shown in Figure 2, the gas prices for this year are already substantially higher than last year's prices, which I expect to be closer to the prices used in the SWEEP study as the study was published in early this year. On average, the gas commodity price increase in this year is about 32 percent relative to last year's prices, using the available gas price data between July to December in 2021 and 2022 as presented in Figure 2. Including gas transmission and distribution charges, I estimate that the gas cost increase is about 25 percent relative to last year. Since 2021, residential electricity prices only

1 modestly increased at about 4 percent on average, according to EIA.<sup>10</sup> I used these  
2 cost escalation factors and recalculated the economics of heat pumps for the two  
3 New Mexico cities in Table 3 as an illustrative analysis. This analysis shows that  
4 heat pumps would become an economical choice for consumers in all cases  
5 except one new construction case in Albuquerque. The lifetime cost savings are  
6 about \$67 to \$630 for the three cases with better heat pump economics. For the  
7 new construction case in Albuquerque, heat pumps are about \$1,175 more  
8 expensive over their lifetimes. However, it is important to note that this analysis  
9 excludes the cost of avoiding new gas pipelines for a new home (which is about  
10 \$5,100 based on the SWEEP 2022 study) as well as monthly gas fixed charges.  
11 Furthermore, the federal government will start to provide generous incentives for  
12 heat pumps under a few programs supported by the Inflation Reduction Act  
13 (“IRA”), starting in 2023, to advance building decarbonization. All households  
14 who purchase heat pumps can receive up to \$2,000 as tax credits and income-  
15 qualified households can receive a total of \$8,000 as rebates in a separate  
16 program.<sup>11</sup> Consumers will be better off installing heat pumps with these  
17 incentives, even before accounting for the increased natural gas prices.

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<sup>10</sup> U.S. EIA. “Average retail price of electricity, monthly” for New Mexico, available at:  
<https://www.eia.gov/electricity/data/browser/#/topic/7?agg=0,1&geo=00000000001&endsec=vg&freq=M&start=200101&end=202208&ctype=linechart&ltype=pin&rtype=s&pin=&rse=0&maptype=0>.

<sup>11</sup> Ungar, L., Nadel, S. 2022. *Home Energy Upgrade Incentives: Programs in the Inflation Reduction Act and Other Recent Federal Laws*. American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. Available at:  
<https://www.aceee.org/policy-brief/2022/09/home-energy-upgrade-incentives-programs-inflation-reduction-act-and-other>.

**Table 3 Analysis of the Economics Heat Pumps in Two Cities in New Mexico,  
adjusted for Increased Gas and Electricity Prices**

| City and Scenario         | Gas-Fueled Furnace        | Heat Pump                 | Heat Pump Incremental Installation costs (\$) | Total Incremental Life-cycle Costs |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
|                           | NPV of Heating Costs (\$) | NPV of Heating Costs (\$) |   |                                    |
| New Home                  |                           |                           |   |                                    |
| Las Cruces, NM            | \$5,739                   | \$4,187                   | \$1,000                                       | (\$552)                            |
| Albuquerque, NM           | \$8,884                   | \$6,859                   | \$3,200                                       | \$1,175                            |
| Retrofit of Existing Home |                           |                           |   |                                    |
| Las Cruces, NM            | \$6,443                   | \$4,811                   | \$1,000                                       | (\$631)                            |
| Albuquerque, NM           | \$9,950                   | \$8,083                   | \$1,800                                       | (\$67)                             |

Gas prices could decline over the upcoming year, but the available industry price projections such as the EIA and NYMEX futures prices indicate that the prices are likely to remain high, as shown in Figure 1. Finally, it is important to note that future gas transmission and distribution prices could increase substantially in the long-term if gas companies need to reduce their gas sales to meet the state's GHG reduction mandates. I will discuss this issue in more detail later in this testimony.

**Q How do the customer economics of heat pump water heaters compare with those of heat pumps for space heating?**

**A** The SWEEP 2022 study also estimated the economics of heat pump water heaters against gas-fueled water heaters. The study found that heat pump water heaters are \$380 to \$440 more expensive on a lifecycle basis.<sup>12</sup> However, assuming higher gas prices, as discussed for heat pumps for space heating, I expect that the economics of heat pump water heaters would be comparable to gas-fueled water heaters. As an example, SWEEP estimates the lifetime operating costs of a gas-fueled water heater and a heat pump water heater in Albuquerque are \$1,257 and

<sup>12</sup> SWEEP. 2022. Table 14.

1       \$733 respectively and the incremental cost of a heat pump is \$900. The operating  
2       cost savings of this heat pump water heater is \$524 with the current gas price  
3       assumed in the SWEEP study. If the overall gas and electricity costs are increased  
4       by 25 percent and 4 percent, respectively, as I assumed in my analysis of heat  
5       pumps for space heating above, the total lifetime operating costs will increase to  
6       about \$1,571 for a gas water heater and \$762 for a heat pump water heater. This  
7       will increase the operating cost savings for a heat pump water heater to \$838  
8       (\$1,571 - \$733). As a result, the total lifecycle cost of a heat pump water heater  
9       will be just \$90 more expensive than a gas water heater.

10      However, it is important to note that even without assuming higher gas prices,  
11      heat pump water heaters will become an economic choice for numerous  
12      consumers starting next year because of the generous incentives that will become  
13      available because of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The IRA provides  
14      incentives for heat pump water heaters. All households can receive up to \$2,000  
15      as a tax credit and income-qualified households can receive an incentive of  
16      \$1,750 as a rebate.<sup>13</sup>

17   **Q     The price projections you've shown go out only a few years, much shorter**  
18       **than the lifetime of new space- and water-heating equipment. What insights**  
19       **would you share with customers and the Commission regarding longer-term**  
20       **gas rates?**

21   **A     In the long term, there is a high likelihood that gas rates gradually increase over**  
22       time to a much higher level than we are experiencing this year. As a growing  
23       number of customers use heat pumps instead of traditional gas-fueled  
24       equipment—due to federal, state, and local policies and the advancement of the

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<sup>13</sup> Ungar, L., Nadel, S. 2022.

1       heat pump market—gas companies will have to raise their gas rates in order to  
2       recover their fixed costs over a smaller volume of sales. If New Mexico gas  
3       customers were to reduce their gas use by 45 percent by 2030 relative to the 2005  
4       level (which means a 50 percent reduction from today’s level as I discussed at the  
5       beginning of this section above) in line with state GHG policy, NMGC and the  
6       other gas companies in the state would need to double the distribution portion of  
7       gas rates to recover the same revenue requirement.

8       A recent Synapse study conducted for the Maryland Office of People’s Counsel  
9       analyzed the potential impact of gas prices and bills for consumers in a few  
10      building decarbonization scenarios meeting the state’s GHG reduction  
11      mandates.<sup>14</sup> The study found that average gas bills could roughly double for  
12      residential customers by 2035 and increase by 4 to 8 times by 2050, largely driven  
13      by declining gas sales and an increasing amount of expensive low-carbon gaseous  
14      fuels (e.g., biomethane and synthetic natural gas) to meet the state’s GHG  
15      reduction mandates.

16   **Q     How do you estimate electrification measures would perform on the Utility**  
17   **Cost Test, from the gas utility perspective?**

18   **A**Electrification is likely to be a very cost-effective measure based on the UCT. A  
19       utility offering a comparable incentive for a gas-fueled furnace and a heat pump  
20       could achieve much greater gas savings because the electric equipment would  
21       reduce most, if not all, of the building’s space-heating gas use. The resulting

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<sup>14</sup> Synapse Energy Economics. 2022. *Climate Policy for Maryland’s Gas Utilities: Financial Implications*. Prepared for Maryland Office of People’s Counsel. Available at: <https://opc.maryland.gov/Gas-Rates-Climate-Report>.

1 utility cost per therm of savings would be much lower because of the much  
2 greater gas savings. Similar UCT impacts would be observed for water heating.

3 Q **Is the UCT the right test to use when considering fuel-switching measures?**

4 A The UCT has some value in this case, but it would be better to use a more  
5 comprehensive cost-effectiveness test that considers the cost of increased  
6 electricity consumption. While New Mexico has not adopted such a test, I  
7 recommend that the Commission require use of a fuel-agnostic test when  
8 considering coordinated gas and electric efficiency programs.

9 Q **How would you recommend the Company address the issues you raised  
10 regarding gas-fueled water- and space-heating equipment replacement  
11 incentives for the Company's 2023–2025 EEP?**

12 A The Commission should direct the Company to shift the funding for gas-fueled  
13 water and space heating equipment to weatherization and other non-gas  
14 equipment measures (e.g., smart thermostats, low flow showerheads) for all  
15 customers except income-qualified customers. This recommendation applies to  
16 gas equipment for new and existing homes and buildings in the following  
17 programs: Water Heating, Space Heating, Multifamily (except low-income  
18 customers targeted under this program), and Efficient Buildings. I further  
19 recommend that the Commission direct the Company to spend the next year  
20 incorporating electric heat pumps and electric heat pump water heaters as gas and  
21 GHG emissions savings measures into its 2024 and 2025 revised EEPs with a  
22 goal of launching the new offering a year from now at the latest.

1     **Q     Do you know any other jurisdictions where gas companies or other entities**  
2           **eliminated incentives for gas equipment and/or started offering incentives for**  
3           **electric heat pumps as fuel switching measures from gas heating end-uses?**

4     **A     Yes. the District of Columbia's Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU), a**  
5           jurisdiction-wide energy efficiency program administrator, recently decided to  
6           discontinue gas equipment incentives to support the District's building  
7           decarbonization initiative. The DCSEU shifted the funding to support electric heat  
8           pump incentives.<sup>15</sup> All the gas investor-owned utilities in Massachusetts started  
9           offering incentives for electric heat pumps in their 2022-2024 EEPs.<sup>16</sup> Vermont  
10          Gas Systems (VGS), a regulated gas company in Vermont, has been promoting  
11          heat pumps since 2021 to be compatible with the state's GHG reduction  
12          mandates.<sup>17</sup>

13    **Q     Does this conclude your testimony?**

14    **A     Yes.**

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<sup>15</sup> DCSEU. 2021. 2021 Annual Report. page 17. Available at:  
<https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/publication/attachments/DCSEU-AnnualReport-Final-11.30.2021.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> D.P.U. 21-129, NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy's response to Information Request AG-Common 1-2, November 19, 2021, available at:  
[fileservice.eea.comacloud.net/FileService.Api/file/FileRoom/14215601](https://fileservice.eea.comacloud.net/FileService.Api/file/FileRoom/14215601)

<sup>17</sup> Hood, M. et al. 2022. "The Gas Utility of the Future is Here, and It Looks Like This." Proceedings of the 2022 ACEEE Summer Study of Energy Efficiency in Buildings. Available at:  
[https://www.aceee.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/ssb/20220810191634048\\_17d392a3-2631-4b57-a395-a63dcc001c97.pdf](https://www.aceee.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/ssb/20220810191634048_17d392a3-2631-4b57-a395-a63dcc001c97.pdf)

**BEFORE THE NEW MEXICO PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION )  
OF NEW MEXICO GAS COMPANY, INC. )  
FOR APPROVAL OF ITS 2023-2025 ENERGY )  
EFFICIENCY PROGRAM PURSUANT TO )  
THE NEW MEXICO PUBLIC UTILITY AND )  
ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACTS )**

**Case No. 22-00232-UT**

**AFFIRMATION (IN LIEU OF AFFIDAVIT)**

**OF KENJI TAKAHASHI**

In compliance with the Temporary NMPRC Electronic Filing Policy of March 20, 2020, and under Rule 1-011(B) NMRA of the New Mexico Rules of Procedures for the District Courts, I, Kenji Takahashi, hereby file this testimony on behalf of the New Mexico Attorney General and state as follows:

I hereby affirm in writing under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of New Mexico that the statements contained in the foregoing Testimony of Kenji Takahashi on behalf of the Office of Attorney General are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

I further declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on November 30, 2022.

*Kenji Takahashi*

Kenji Takahashi (electronically signed)  
Expert Witness on Behalf of the New Mexico Attorney General  
485 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 3  
Cambridge, MA 02139

## **Appendix A: Resume of Kenji Takahashi**

## **Kenji Takahashi, Senior Associate**

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Synapse Energy Economics | 485 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 3 | Cambridge, MA 02139 | 617-453-7038

ktakahashi@synapse-energy.com

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Synapse Energy Economics Inc**, Cambridge, MA. *Senior Associate, 2015–present; Associate, 2004–2015.*

Analyzes technologies, policies, and regulations associated with supply- and demand-side energy resources. Assesses the performance, costs, and potential of energy efficiency measures, renewable energy resources, and building decarbonization and electrification measures. Examines economic and environmental implications of clean energy policies and programs associated with energy efficiency, demand response, distributed generation, and renewable energy. Analyzes ratemaking issues such as standby rates and time of use rates for distributed generation, and decoupling rate mechanisms for energy efficiency measures. Investigates electricity and natural gas market price trends and fluctuations. Prepares expert testimony and reports for regulatory proceedings.

**Center for Energy and Environmental Policy**, University of Delaware, Newark, DE. *Research Associate, 2002 – 2004.*

Researched the market potential of distributed resources under different electric distribution rate designs (report prepared for Conectiv Power Delivery Company). Investigated the potential of the Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM) in Asian developing countries and the Japanese government's policy for CDM. Contributed to a market penetration study for photovoltaic technologies in comparison with the predicted oil production from the oil reservoirs in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (report prepared for Astropower, Inc.). Analyzed the installation of PV and generation-set options for the Assateague Beach Coastal Guard Station at the Assateague Island National Seashore in Maryland (report prepared for the U.S. National Park Service).

**Delaware Division of Public Advocate**, Wilmington, DE. *Research Intern, 2003.*

Researched and wrote reports on states' policies regarding (1) energy efficiency/load management programs in order to identify cost-effective programs for implementation in Delaware; (2) electric standard offer service/default service (rate designs) for those who do not choose alternative suppliers under the deregulation process; (3) electric universal service and system benefit charges for protecting consumers from risks associated with electricity restructuring; and (4) Contributions and Advances-in-Aid-of-Construction for water supply extensions.

**Resources for the Future**, Washington DC. *Research Intern, 2002.*

Investigated current and planned wind power capacity for the United States. Analyzed the EPA and EIA market models to estimate technical and economic potential of wind power in the United States.

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Researched the status of renewable energy supply in Japan's electricity sector for the Economic and Social Research Institute, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan.

**Citizens' Alliance for Saving the Atmosphere and the Earth (CASA)**, Osaka, Japan. *Volunteer and Researcher*, 1999 – 2001.

Worked as a newsletter writer, editor, and event organizer. Wrote a report on the first experimental biomass energy facility in Japan and the photovoltaic system at Yagi Junior High School in Kyoto, Japan. Participated in a research project to investigate renewable energy potential and policies in Japan. Wrote a report on problems of nuclear power plants affecting communities in Fukui prefecture, Japan.

## EDUCATION

**University of Delaware, Center for Energy and Environmental Policy, Joseph R. Biden, Jr School of Public Policy and Administration**, Newark, DE

Master of Arts in Urban Affairs and Public Policy with a focus on Energy and Environmental Policy, 2003. Master's thesis: *Policies to Support Distributed Resources under Different Electricity Restructuring Models*. Courses in energy economics, energy and environmental policy, electricity policy and planning, political economy of environment, solar electric technology, cost-benefit and decision-making analyses, and geographic information system.

**Kansai University**, Osaka, Japan

Bachelor of Arts in Law with a concentration in Public Administration, 2000.

## AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- Director's Citation, Joseph R. Biden, Jr School of Public Policy and Administration, University of Delaware. May 2003.
- NEC scholarship for an environmental education leader-training program funded by one of the leading Japanese computer companies, NEC. November 2000.

## ADDITIONAL SKILLS

**Software:** MS Office, Minitab, Analytica, IMPLAN, AVOIDed Emissions and geneRation Tool (AVERT), CO-Benefits Risk Assessment (COBRA), RETScreen, BEopt™, REM/Rate™

**Language:** Japanese, Cantonese, and Spanish

## OTHER RELEVANT WORK

- Currently assessing Puget Sound Energy's Energize Eastside project proposal on behalf of the City of Newcastle. The focus of this assessment is on (a) the reasonableness of the utility's historical loads and load forecasts including energy efficiency, demand response,

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and distributed energy resources; and (b) whether there is a need to build new transmission infrastructure as proposed under the company's Energize Eastside project proposal.

- Assisted NYSERDA with developing (a) a database of renewable heating and cooling (RH&C) technologies, (b) an Excel-based tool to analyze benefits and costs of RH&C, and (c) a state RH&C Policy Framework titled "Renewable Heating and Cooling Policy Framework: Options to Advance Industry Growth and Markets in New York."
- Assisted U.S. EPA with its analysis for and preparation for technical support documents on energy efficiency associated with U.S. EPA's Clean Power Plan under 111(d) regulation
- Assisted New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel with reviewing and commenting on various energy related proposals and documents in New Jersey including utility and the state energy efficiency programs and the state's energy plans. 2009 to present.
- Assisted Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board with a review of energy efficiency potential and integrated resource planning for Nova Scotia Power's jurisdiction. 2013
- Assisted the Hawaii Division of Consumer Advocacy in proceedings to develop and review IRPs for three electric companies and to review the state's energy efficiency programs. 2012 to 2014.
- Assisted the Arkansas Public Service Commission staff with (a) reviewing and assessing utility integrated resource planning and energy efficiency program proposals and (b) drafting regulatory orders on comprehensive energy efficiency program designs and reporting methods. 2012 to 2013.
- Assessed on behalf of Sierra Club energy efficiency and demand response potential estimates by the Cadmus Group for Puget Sound Energy, September 2012.
- Assumed a general contractor role for renovating an existing multi-family house into an ultra-low energy use house equipped with state-of-art energy efficiency measures (such as R-7 windows, R-70 roof insulation, a 95 percent efficient energy recovery ventilation system, cold climate heat pumps) and a 5 kW solar photovoltaic system. December 2012.
- Assessed on behalf of Sierra Club energy efficiency goals proposed in the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's 2010 integrated resource plan.
- Assisted Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board with developing Community Based Feed-In Tariffs (COMFITs) for five different technologies: small wind projects, medium-sized wind projects, small hydro, small tidal, and biomass CHP projects. April 2011.
- Analyzed existing deep energy retrofit (DER) project data and analyzed potential energy savings from model partial DER projects (e.g., attic, above-grade wall, windows, basement wall) using REM/Rate building energy software and Synapse's own spreadsheet building energy model developed for this research project. The results from the analysis were used to project energy savings from and to set incentive levels for partial DER projects as part of National Grid's 2013-2015 efficiency program filing.

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- Assisted several states, including Alaska, Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, and South Carolina with developing and analyzing their state climate change action plans; evaluated costs and benefits of demand and supply-side policy options, including quantifying expected greenhouse emission reductions. 2007 to 2010.
  - Arranged meetings for Union Fenosa/Gas Natural, a Spanish electric and gas company, with Japanese and Korean organizations to study energy efficiency technologies, programs and policies in those countries; Visited Japanese organizations with the delegates of Union Fenosa, provided them technical and translation assistance on energy efficiency in Japan. July 26 to July 31, 2009.

## PUBLICATIONS

Wilson, R., I. Addleton, K. Takahashi, J. Litynski. 2021. *Clean, Affordable, and Reliable: A Plan for Duke Energy's Future in the Carolinas*. Synapse Energy Economics for North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association, Carolinas Clean Energy Business Alliance, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, Natural Resources Defense Council and the Sierra Club.

Hopkins, A. S., A. Napoleon, K. Takahashi. 2021. *A Framework for Long-Term Gas Utility Planning in Colorado*. Synapse Energy Economics for the Colorado Energy Office.

Kallay, J., A. Napoleon, K. Takahashi, E. Sinclair, T. Woolf. 2021. *Opportunities for Evergy Kansas to Address Energy Equity Within its Integrated Resource Plan and Other Planning Processes*. Synapse Energy Economics for Union of Concerned Scientists.

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Takahashi, K., J. Frost, D. Goldberg, A. S. Hopkins, K. Nishio, K. Nakano. 2020. *Survey of U.S. State and Local Building Decarbonization Policies and Programs*. Presented at the 2020 ACEEE Summer Study of Energy Efficiency in Buildings.

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Kallay, J., A. Hopkins, J. Frost, A. Napoleon, K. Takahashi, J. Slason, G. Freeman, D. Grover, B. Swanson. 2019. *Net Zero Energy Roadmap for the City of Burlington, Vermont*. Synapse Energy Economics and Resource Systems Group for Burlington Electric Department.

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- 2019 Electrification U.S. Symposium Series – Pathways to Decarbonization in the Northeast, August 27-29, 2019.
- 2019 AESP Annual Conference, January 24, 2019.
- 2018 ACEEE Summer Study on Energy Efficiency in Buildings, August 12, 2018.
- 2017 ACEEE National Conference on Energy Efficiency as a Resource, October 30, 2017.
- 9th International Conference on Energy Efficiency in Domestic Appliances and Lighting (EEDAL'17), September 13-15, 2017.
- NEEP Northeast Strategic Energy Management Collaborative Workshop, November 15, 2016.
- NEEP 2016 EM&V Forum Annual Public Meeting: the Future of Evaluation, March 30, 2016.
- 2015 ACEEE National Conference on Energy Efficiency as a Resource, September 21, 2015.
- EUCI Conference on Utility Integrated Resource Planning (IRP), May 13-15, 2015.
- 2013 ACEEE National Conference on Energy Efficiency as a Resource, September 22-24, 2013.
- 7th International Conference on Energy Efficiency in Domestic Appliances and Lighting (EEDAL'13), September 11-13, 2013.
- Energy Measure Verification Workshop (sponsored by Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources), September 2013.
- Smart Building: High Performance Homes - Workshop for building professionals, June 22, 2011.
- NESEA Building Energy 11 Conference, March 8-10, 2011.
- Build Boston 2010 on Residential Design and Construction, November 17, 2010.
- ACI New England Conference 2010, October 6, 2010.
- 2010 ACEEE Summer Study on Energy Efficiency in Buildings, August 18-20, 2010.
- NESEA Building Energy 10 Conference, March 8-10, 2010.
- 5th International Conference on Energy Efficiency in Domestic Appliances and Lighting (EEDAL'09), June 24, 2009.
- 2008 ACEEE Summer Study on Energy Efficiency in Buildings, August 21, 2008.
- Tufts University Clean Distributed Energy Workshop, June 8, 2006.
- The 2006 Northeast Energy Efficiency Summit, May 17.
- The 2006 Distributed Generation & Interconnection Conference held by DTE Energy, April 26-28, 2006.

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*Resume updated January 2022*

## **Appendix B: NMGC 2023-2025 EEP Benefit-Cost Model**

Please find an electronic version only (in Excel) attached.

**BEFORE THE NEW MEXICO PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION )  
OF NEW MEXICO GAS COMPANY, INC. )  
FOR APPROVAL OF ITS 2023-2025 ENERGY )  
EFFICIENCY PROGRAM PURSUANT TO )  
THE NEW MEXICO PUBLIC UTILITY AND )  
ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACTS )**

**Case No. 22-00232-UT**

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

**I CERTIFY** that on this date I sent, via email to the parties and individuals listed below,

a true and correct copy of the **OAG's Direct Testimony**:

|                    |  |                      |  |
|--------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| Thomas Domme       | tmd@jhkmlaw.com;   | Saul J. Ramos        | sramos@doeal.gov;  |
| Brian Haverly      | bjh@jhkmlaw.com;   | Dwight Etheridge     | detheridge@exeterassociates.com;                                       |
| Julianna T. Hopper | jth@jhkmlaw.com;   | Felipe A. Salcedo    | fsalcedo@exeterassociates.com;   |
| Rebecca Carter     | rebecca.carter@nmgco.com;  | Kevin O'Donnell      | kodonnell@novaenergyconsultants.com;                                   |
| Gerald Weseen      | gerald.weseen@nmgco.com;   | Joseph Yar           | joseph@yarlawoffice.com;   |
| Nicole V. Strauser | nicole.strauser@nmgco.com;   | Scott DeGering       | sdegering@summitcorp.net;  |
| Michael Gorman     | mgorman@consultbai.com;  | Johnathan Burris     | jburris@tigernaturalgas.com;   |
| Gideon Elliot      | gelliot@nmag.gov;  | Anthony Apodaca      | aapodaca@tigernaturalgas.com;  |
| Keven Gedko        | kgedko@nmag.gov;   | Philo Shelton        | philo.shelton@lacnm.us;  |
| Sydney Wright      | swright@nmag.gov;  | Kevin J. Powers      | kevin.powers@lacnm.us;   |
| Jennifer Kallay    | jkallay@synapse-energy.com;  | Daniel A. Najjar     | dnajjar@virtuelaw.com;   |
| Kenji Takahashi    | ktakahashi@synapse-energy.com;   | Julie Park           | jpark@cabq.gov;  |
| Doug Gegax         | dgegax@nmsu.edu;   | Larry Blank          | lb@tahoeconomics.com;  |
| Mariel Nanasi      | mariel@seedsbeneaththesnow.com;  | Saif Ismail          | sismail@cabq.gov;  |
| Cara R. Lynch      | lynch.cara.NM@gmail.com;   | Jennifer Lucero      | jenniferlucero@cabq.gov;   |
| Charles de Saillan | desaillan.ccae@gmail.com   | Elisha Leyba-Tercero | elisha.leyba-tercero@prc.nm.gov;                                       |
| Lance Kaufman      | lance@aegisinsight.com;  | Ryan Friedman        | Ryan.Friedman@prc.nm.gov;  |
| Sara Gersen        | sgersen@earthjustice.org;  | John Bogatko         | <a href="mailto:John.Bogatko@prc.nm.gov">John.Bogatko@prc.nm.gov</a> ; |
| Shannon Sweeney    | shannon@sweenyesq.com;   | Timothy Martinez     | timothy.martinez@prc.nm.gov;   |
| Maya DeGasperi     | mdegasperi@earthjustice.org;   | Marc Tupler          | marc.tupler@prc.nm.gov;  |
| Don Hancock        | <a href="mailto:sricdon@earthlink.net">sricdon@earthlink.net</a> ;                           | Christopher Dunn     | christopher.dunn@prc.nm.gov;   |
| Justin Brant       | <a href="mailto:jbrant@swenergy.org">jbrant@swenergy.org</a> ;                               | Elizabeth Ramirez    | elizabeth.ramirez@prc.nm.gov;  |
| Michael Kenney     | mkenney@swenergy.org;  | Jack Sidler          | <a href="mailto:jack.sidler@prc.nm.gov">jack.sidler@prc.nm.gov</a> ;   |
| Pat O'Connell      | pat.oconnell@westernresources.org;   | Peggy Martinez-Rael  | peggy.martinez-Rael@prc.nm.gov;  |
| Cydney Beadles     | cydney.beadles@westernresources.org;   | Hans Muller          | hans.muller@prc.nm.gov;  |
| Steven S. Michel   | stevensmichel@comcast.net;   | Angelica Anaya Allen | Angelica.Allen@prc.nm.gov;   |
| Caitlin Evans      | <a href="mailto:caitlin.evans@westernresources.org">caitlin.evans@westernresources.org</a> ; | Ana Kippenbrock      | ana.kippenbrock@prc.nm.gov;  |
| Irene Norville     | irene.norville@hq.doe.gov;   |                      |  |
| Peter Meier        | peter.meier@hq.doe.gov;  |                      |  |

**DATED** this November 30, 2022.

**/s/ Keven Gedko**

Keven Gedko  
Assistant Attorney General  
(505) 303-1790  
kgedko@nmag.gov