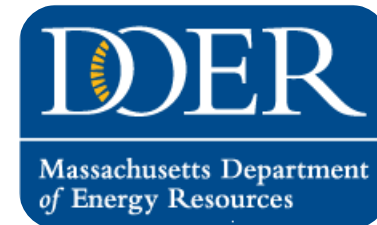


MASSACHUSETTS INTERAGENCY RATES WORKING GROUP

A Collaboration to Advance Near- and Long-Term Rate Designs that Align with the Commonwealth's Decarbonization Goals

NEAR-TERM RATE STRATEGY REPORT DRAFT PRESENTATION – AUGUST 12, 2024



AGENDA

- I. IRWG Introduction & Background (15 minutes)
- II. Presentation from E3 (45 minutes)
- III. Public Comment (30 minutes)



CONTEXT & PURPOSE OF IRWG'S WORK

- Existing electric rates jeopardize the Commonwealth's clean energy goals as they remain a barrier to building and transportation electrification
- Massachusetts Interagency Rates Working Group (IRWG) was formed to **advance near- and long-term electric rate designs that align with the Commonwealth's decarbonization goals** by prioritizing the reduction of energy burden while incentivizing transportation and building electrification
 - Includes representatives from the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EEA), the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC), the Department of Energy Resources (DOER), and the Attorney General's Office (AGO)
 - The IRWG will determine appropriate next steps to support implementation; IRWG member organizations intend to advocate for implementation of electric rate designs aligned with their recommendations



OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE OF NEAR-TERM RATES STRATEGY

- **Objective:** Address barriers to near-term electrification through rate design offerings available before electric consumers receive advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) meters
- **Purpose:** Intended to provide immediate benefits and incentives to consumers and accelerate the transition towards electrification
- **Focus:** Development and implementation of rate design strategies that can be deployed quickly to encourage electrification, with a focus on equitable and practical solutions to overcome existing barriers to electrification without waiting for widespread deployment of AMI meters



IRWG PROCESS

I. Near-Term Rates Strategy (May – Dec)

- Collect stakeholder feedback (May-June)
- E3 presents Near-Term Rates Strategy Draft Report (Aug 12)
- Collect stakeholder feedback on Near-Term Rates Strategy Draft Report (Aug)
- IRWG member organizations draft Near-Term Rates Strategy Recommendations (Aug-Dec)

II. Long-Term Ratemaking Study (Oct – Dec)

- Collect stakeholder feedback (Sept)
- E3 presents Long-Term Ratemaking Draft Study (Oct 28)
- Collect stakeholder feedback on Long-Term Ratemaking Draft Study (Oct-Nov)
- IRWG member organizations draft Long-Term Rates Study Recommendations (Oct-Dec)

III. Interagency Rates Working Group Recommendations (Dec 31)

- IRWG releases Near-Term Rates Strategy and Long-Term Ratemaking Study (E3) and accompanying Recommendations (IRWG member organizations), to include appropriate next steps to advocate for implementation of its recommendations in the Commonwealth



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

IRWG will release recommendations at the end of the year; please register for engagement opportunities at [IRWG's website](#)

AUGUST

M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12 	13	14	15	16
E3 Presentation of Draft Near-Term Rate Strategy Report (NTRSR)				
19 	20	21	22 	23 
EDC/MLP/ Supplier Workshop (NTRSR)		Consumer & Advocacy Workshop (NTRSR)		DG/DER Workshop (NTRSR)
26	27	28	29	30

SEPTEMBER

M	T	W	TH	F
2 Labor Day	3	4  Synthesis Workshop (NTRSR)	5 Public Comment Due on NTRSR Deck	6 
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19  At-Large Long-Term Ratemaking Study Workshop (LTRS)	20
23	24  Consumer & Advocacy Workshop (LTRS)	25	26	27  EDC/MLP/ Supplier Workshop (LTRS)
30  DG/DER Workshop (LTRS)				



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

IRWG will release recommendations at the end of the year; please register for engagement opportunities at [IRWG's website](#)

OCTOBER

M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4 Synthesis Workshop (LTRS)
7	8	9	10	11
14 Indigenous Peoples Day	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28 E3 Presentation of Draft Long-Term Ratemaking Study (LTRS)	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER

M	T	W	TH	F
				1 DG/DER Workshop (LTRS)
4	5 EDC/MLP/ Supplier Workshop (LTRS)	6	7 Consumer & Advocacy Workshop (LTRS)	8
11 Veterans Day	12	13 Synthesis Workshop (LTRS)	14	15 Public Comment Due on LTRS Deck
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28 Thanksgiving Day	29



INTRODUCTION TO E3 PRESENTATION

- IRWG is requesting feedback on the **Near-Term Rate Strategy Draft Report** presented by E3
- Feedback will inform the Near-Term Rate Strategy Report prepared by E3
- The IRWG is hosting a workshop series to engage in dialogue with and between stakeholders on the draft Report
- **Written comments on the Near-Term Rate Strategy Draft Report are due by September 6, 2024 to give sufficient time for consideration and should be sent to Rates.WG@mass.gov**

Stakeholder Feedback

Near-Term Rate Strategy Report



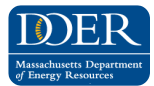
Energy+Environmental Economics



Near-Term Rate Recommendations



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Interagency Rates Working Group

Near-Term Rate Strategy Report Draft

August 12, 2024



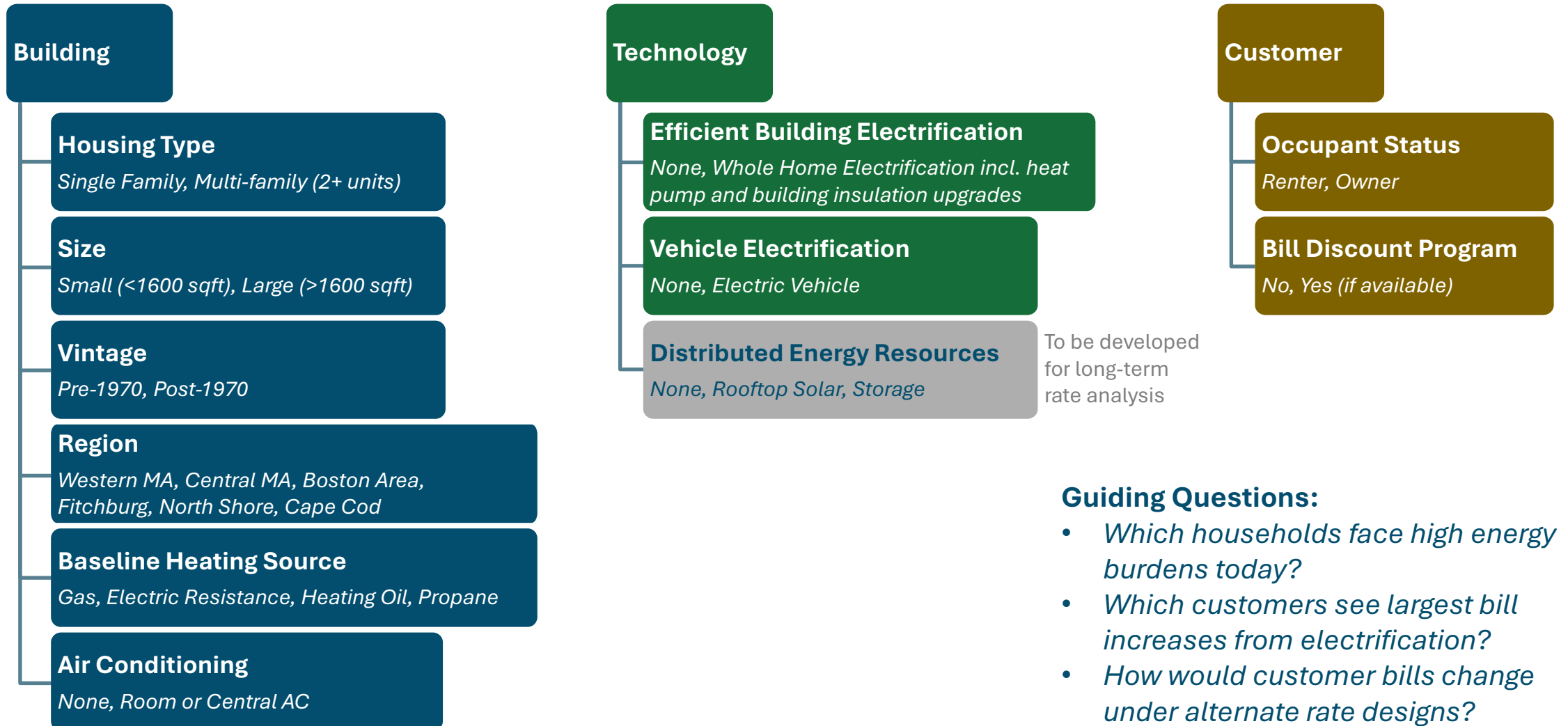
Energy+Environmental Economics

Andrew DeBenedictis
Ari Gold-Parker
Vivan Malkani
Paul Picciano
Brendan Mahoney
Morgan Santoni-Colvin
Disha Trivedi

Outline

- + **Reminder of Study Approach**
- + **Household Energy Use and Energy Burden**
- + **Near-Term Rate Design Alternatives**
- + **Implementation Considerations and Key Takeaways**

Modeling explores diversity of bills with and without electrification under current and alternative rate designs



Household Energy Use and Energy Burden



Energy+Environmental Economics

Electrification entails significant changes to household energy profile and efficiency

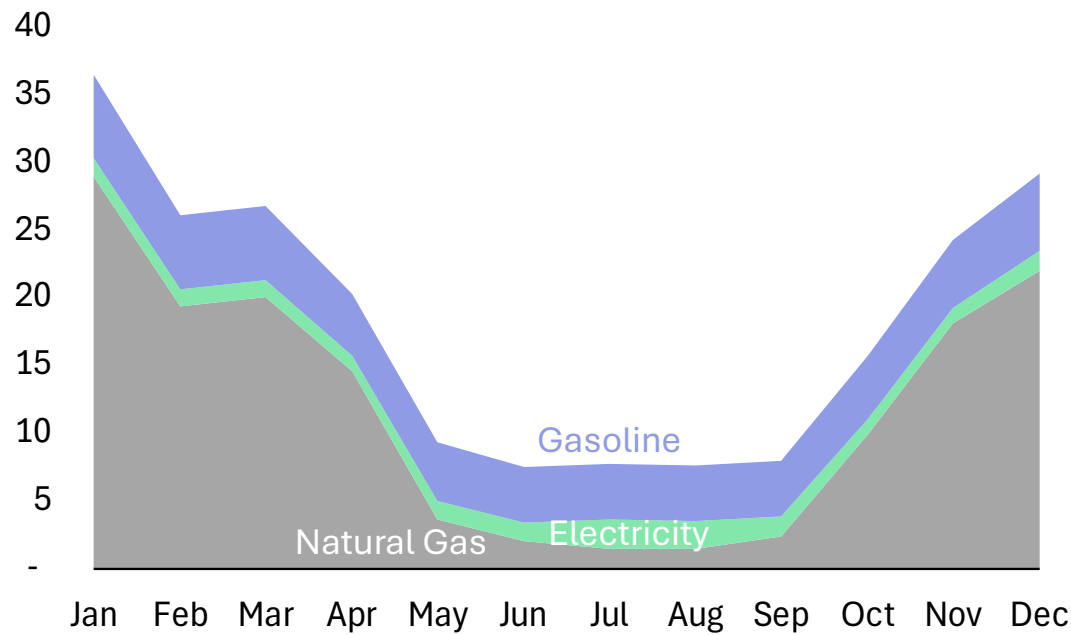
Multifamily Central MA Home - Baseline
Heated by Natural Gas, Gasoline Vehicle

Electric kWh/mo = 400 kWh*

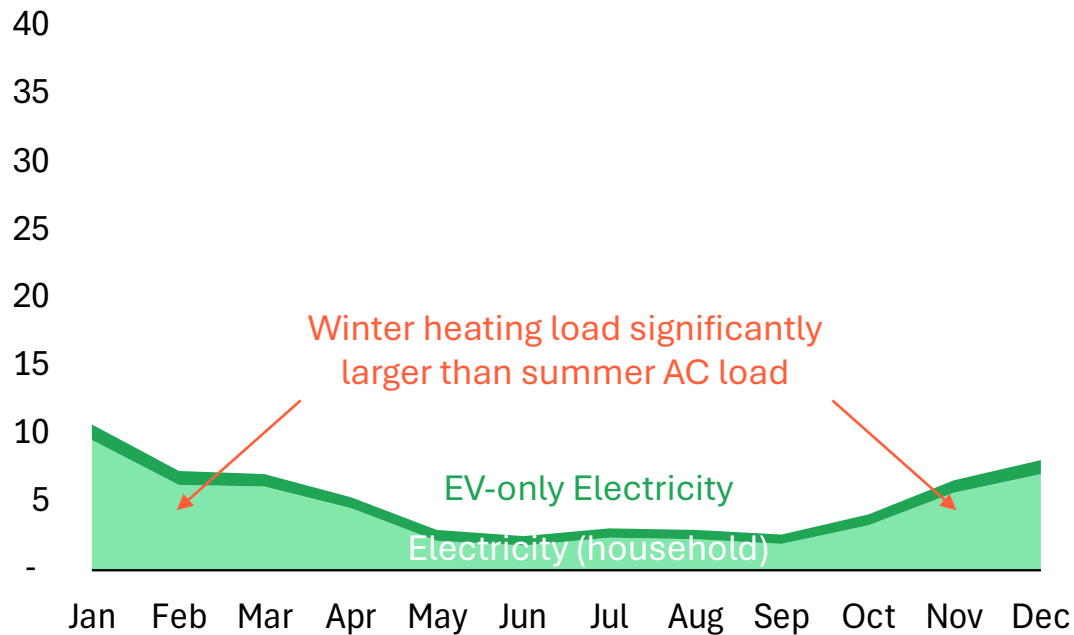
Multifamily Central MA Home - Electrified
All-Electric Home, Insulation Improvements, Electric Vehicle

Added electric kWh/mo: 850 kWh*(heat + appliances) + 250 kWh (EV)
Total = 1,500 kWh

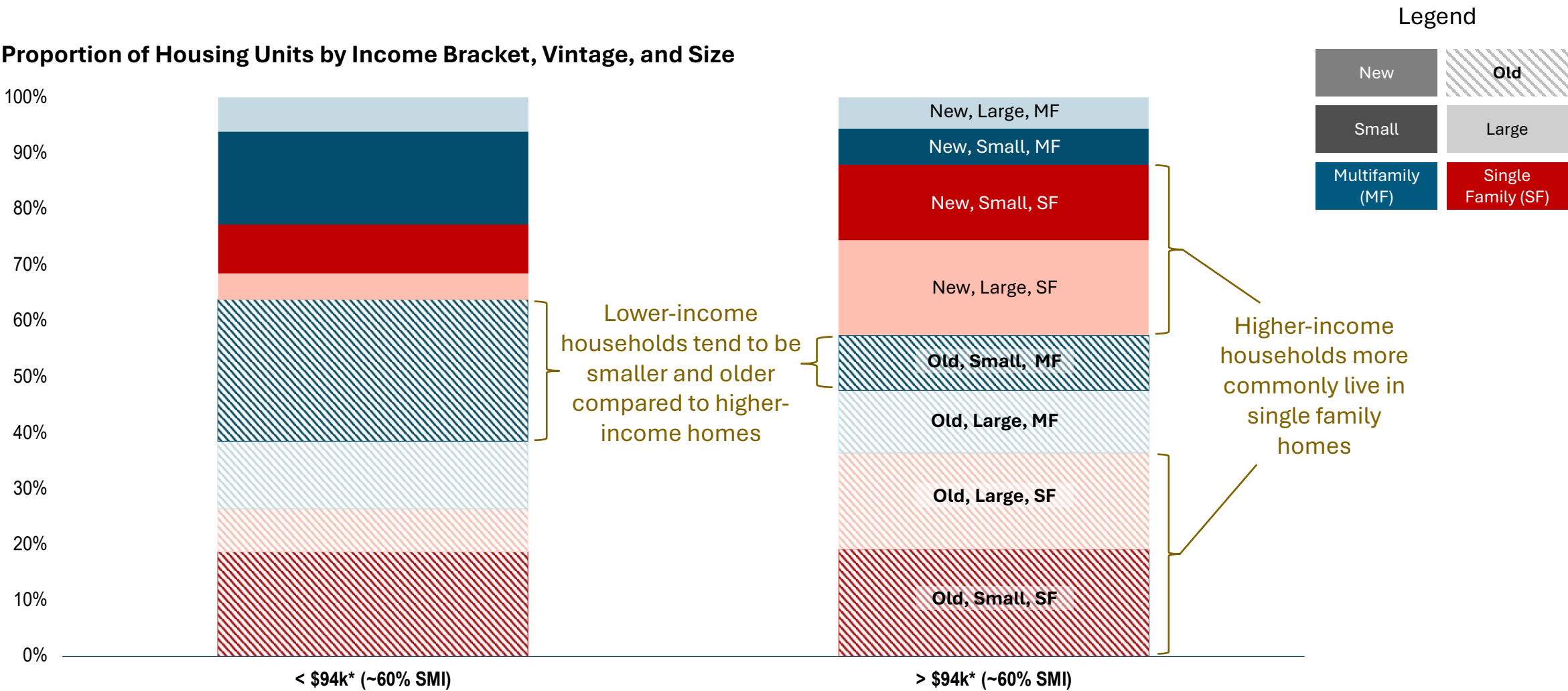
Monthly Energy Consumption (Incl. Vehicle Use)
MMBtu/month



Monthly Energy Consumption (Incl. Vehicle Use)
MMBtu/month



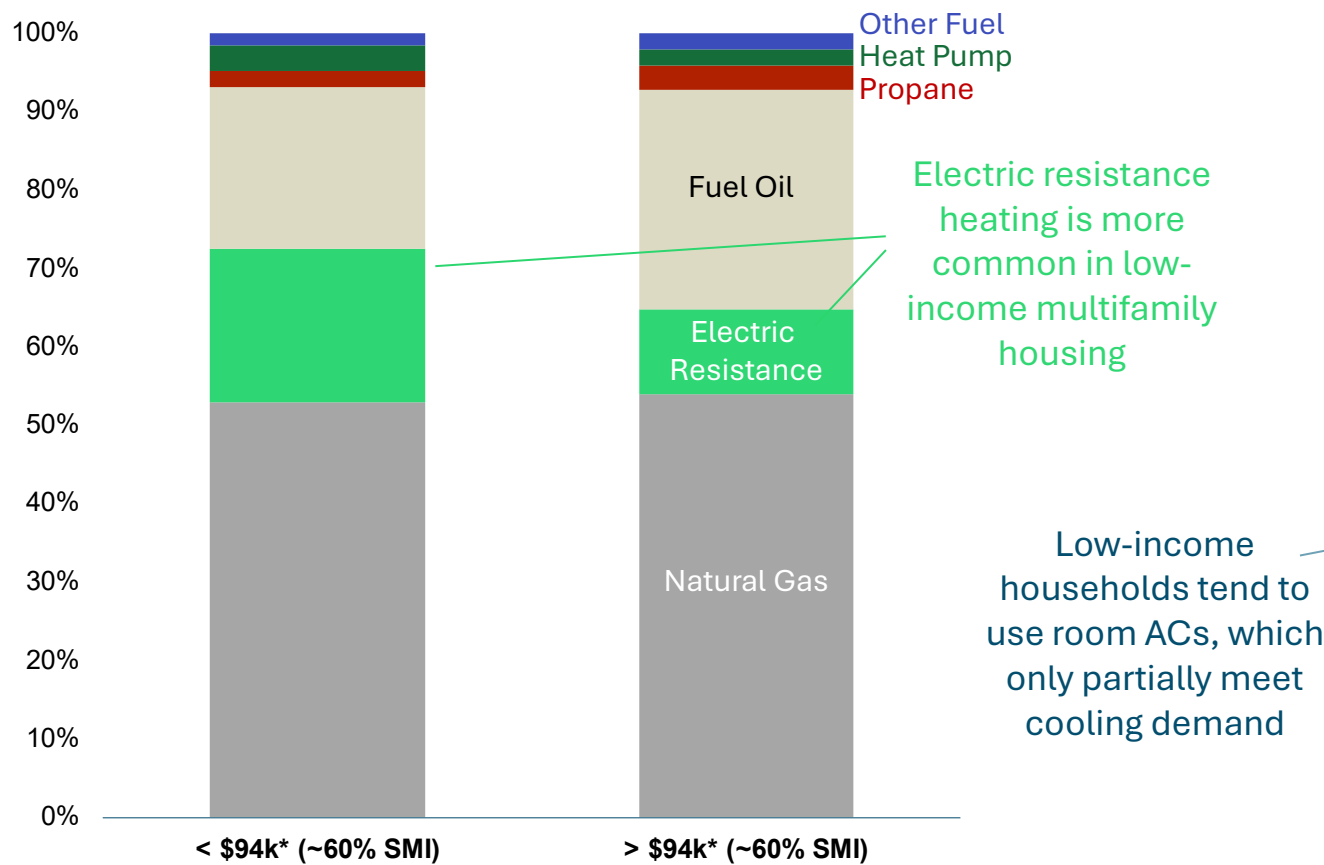
Lower income households tend to be older, smaller and in multifamily buildings



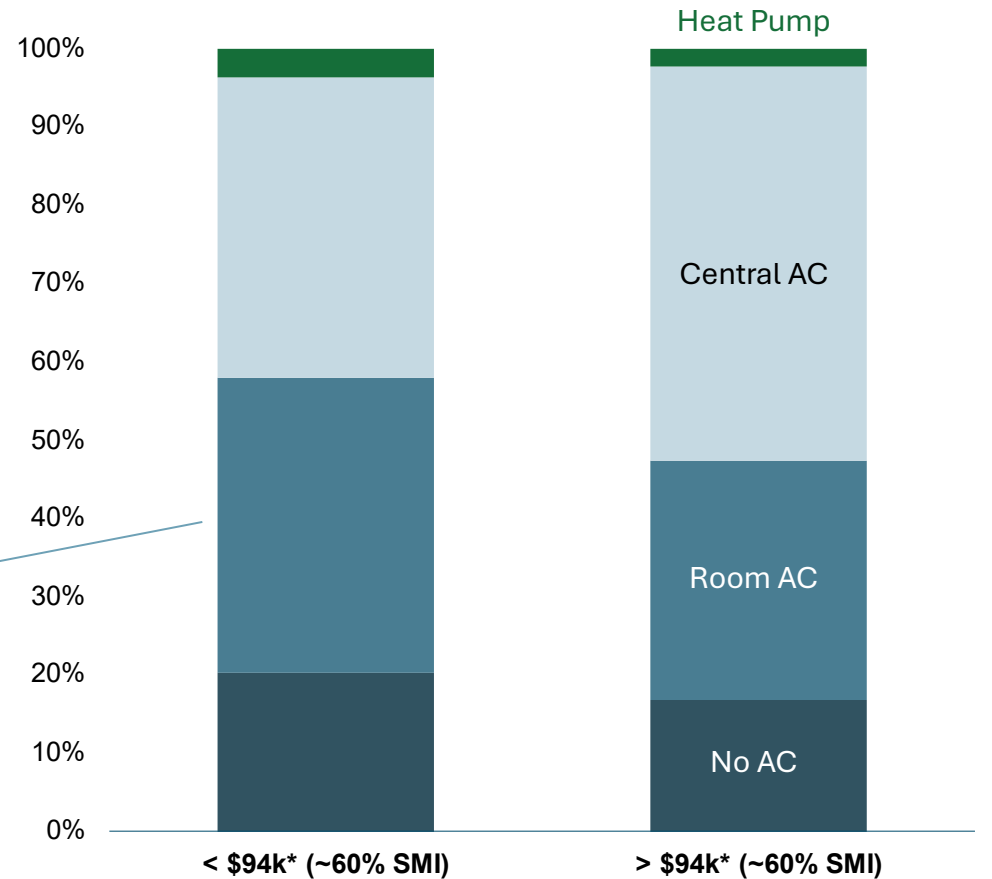
*for a four-person household

Low-income homes rely disproportionately on expensive electric resistance heating and lack central air conditioning

Heating Type Distribution by Income Level
% of households



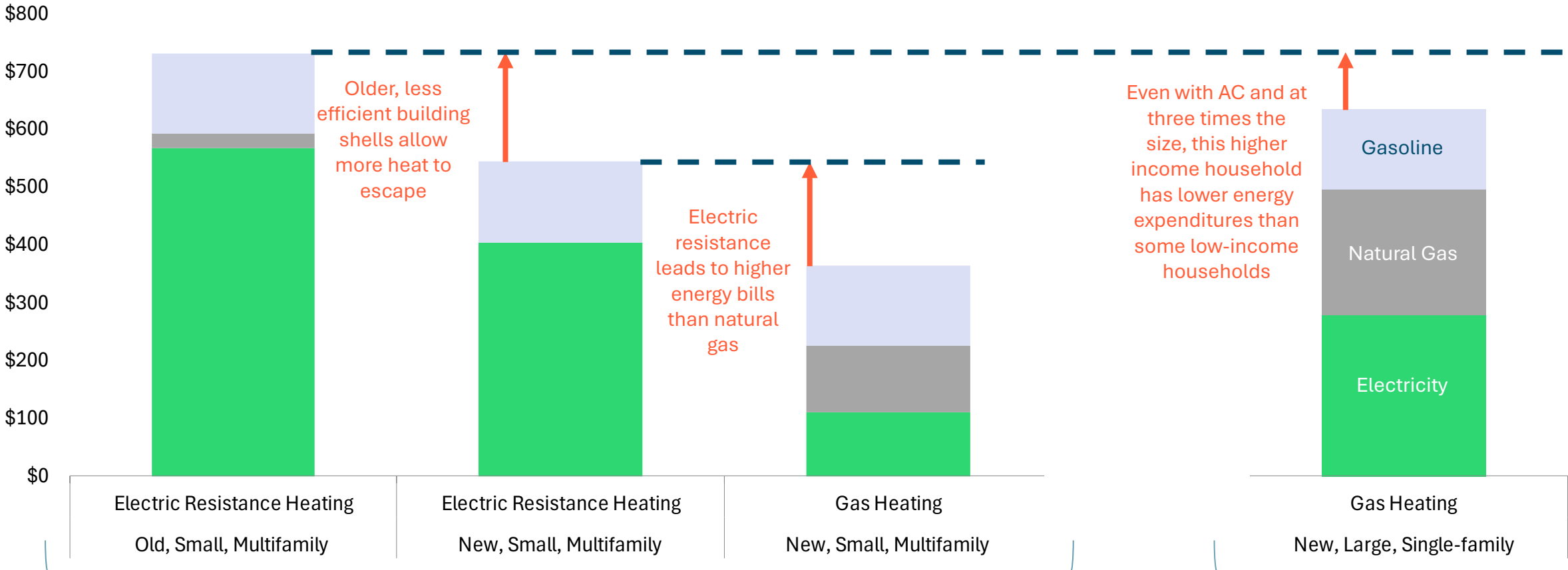
Cooling Type Distribution by Income Level
% of households



*for a four-person household

Older homes using electric resistance heating, common for low-income households, have higher energy costs

Average Monthly Energy Expenditures*
\$/month



Representative low-income households,
Normalized to 1,000 sq. ft and without AC

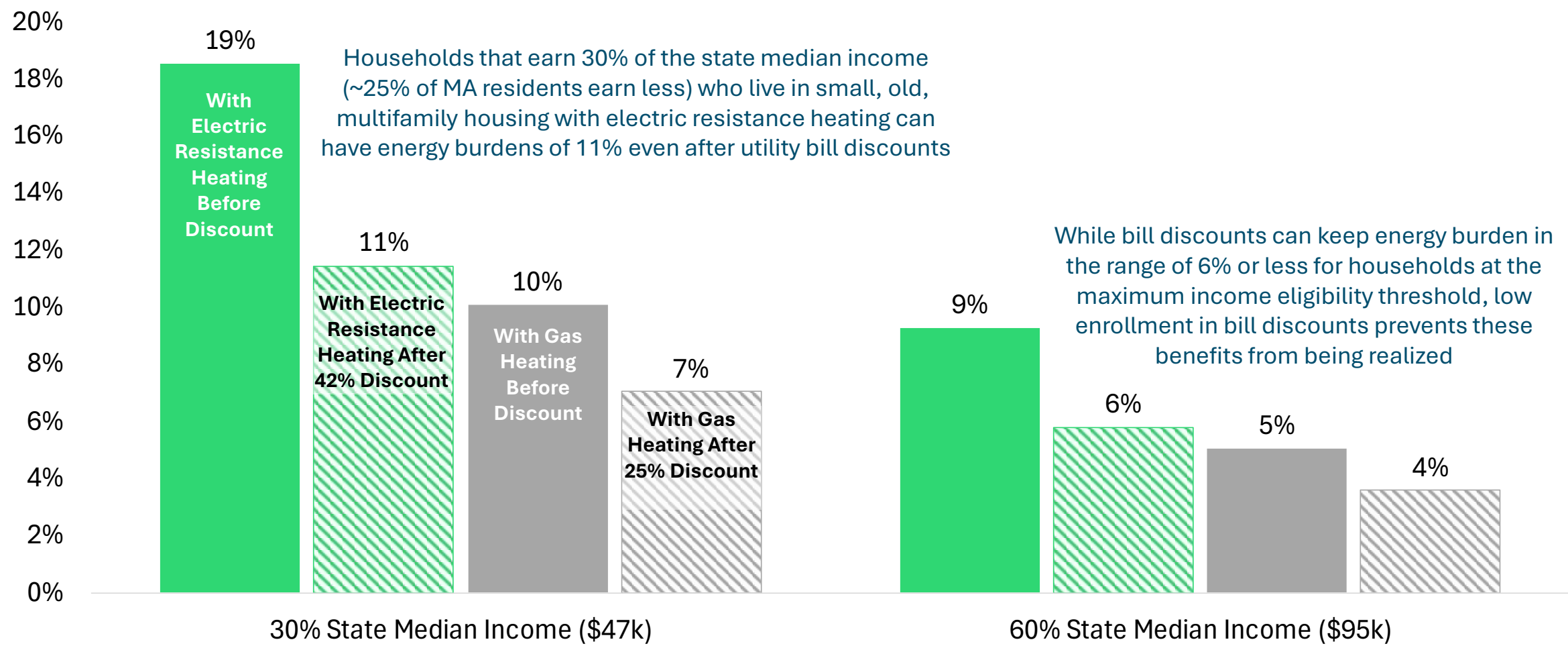
Representative higher income household,
Normalized to 3,000 sq. ft and with AC

*Energy expenditures shown are before any utility bill discounts. The effect of bill discounts is shown in the next slide.

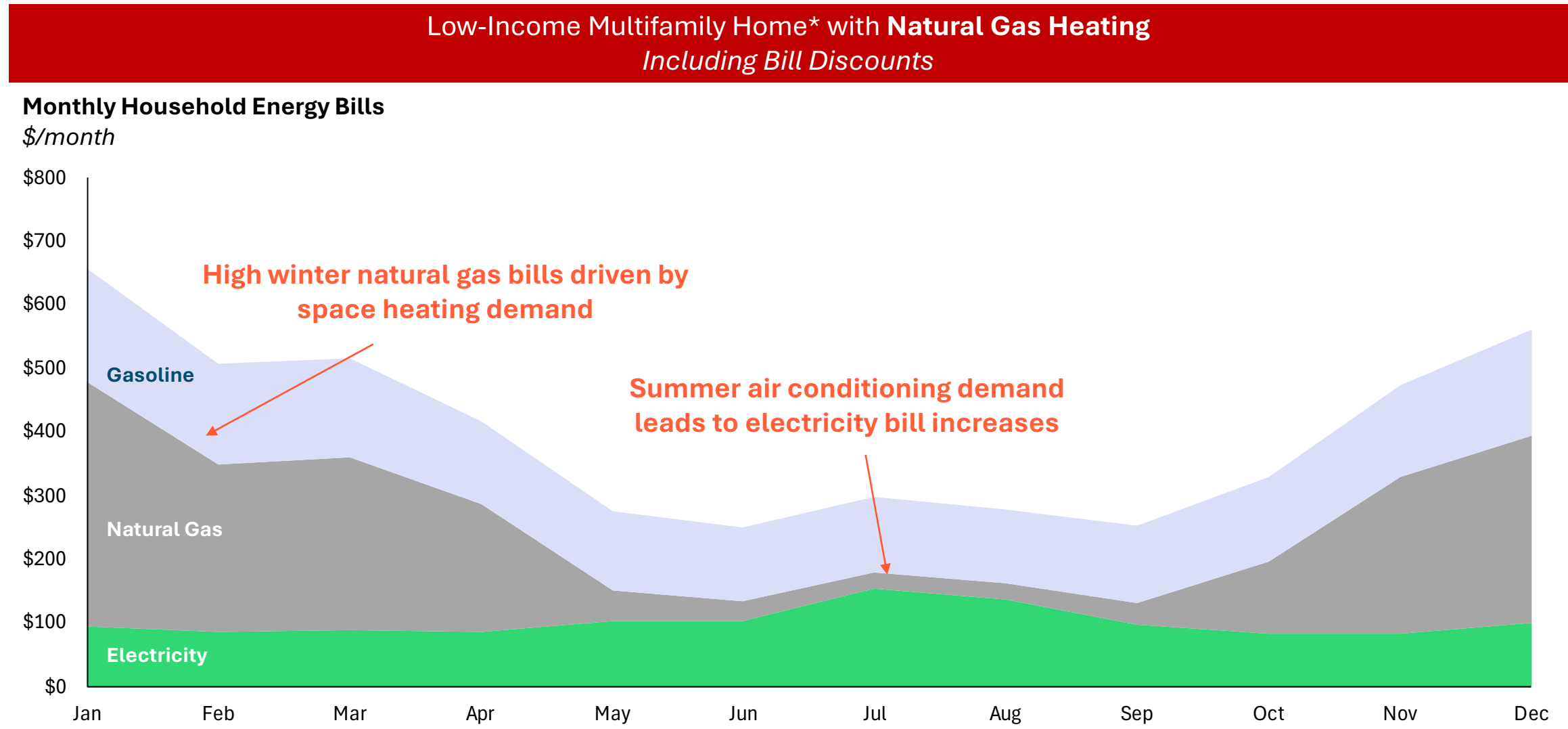
Bill discounts do not provide sufficient reduction in energy burden for lowest-income households

Energy Burden (Incl. Vehicle Use)

% of Annual Gross Income



Seasonal volatility of energy bills presents challenge for low-income households



Important considerations about low-income homes to inform rate and policy design

+ Existing research documents low-income, Black, Hispanic, Native American, and older adult households having disproportionately high energy burdens both in the Boston metro area and nationally¹

- Systemic inequities cause these factors to influence the likelihood of living in older, inefficient homes, as well as relying on electric resistance heating, all of which lead to high energy burdens
 - Additionally, these residents are more likely to rent rather than own their homes, facing high energy bills as a result since landlords have limited incentives to invest in energy efficiency
- In addition to rate design considerations and utility programs, improving access to weatherization, energy efficiency, and housing opportunities could begin to mitigate these undue energy burdens
- Low enrollment in bill discount programs² and higher participation in third party electric supply contracts (that can be more expensive than utility basic service) amongst low-income households can exacerbate energy burden

+ Hidden energy poverty is caused by high energy costs affecting household decisions to use energy services (e.g., turning on the heat later in the season or maintaining a low thermostat setpoint in the winter)

- For example, black households experience a greater need for health services caused by low indoor temperatures³
- Hotter summers and colder winters would exacerbate the health impacts of low-income households restricting cooling or heating energy use

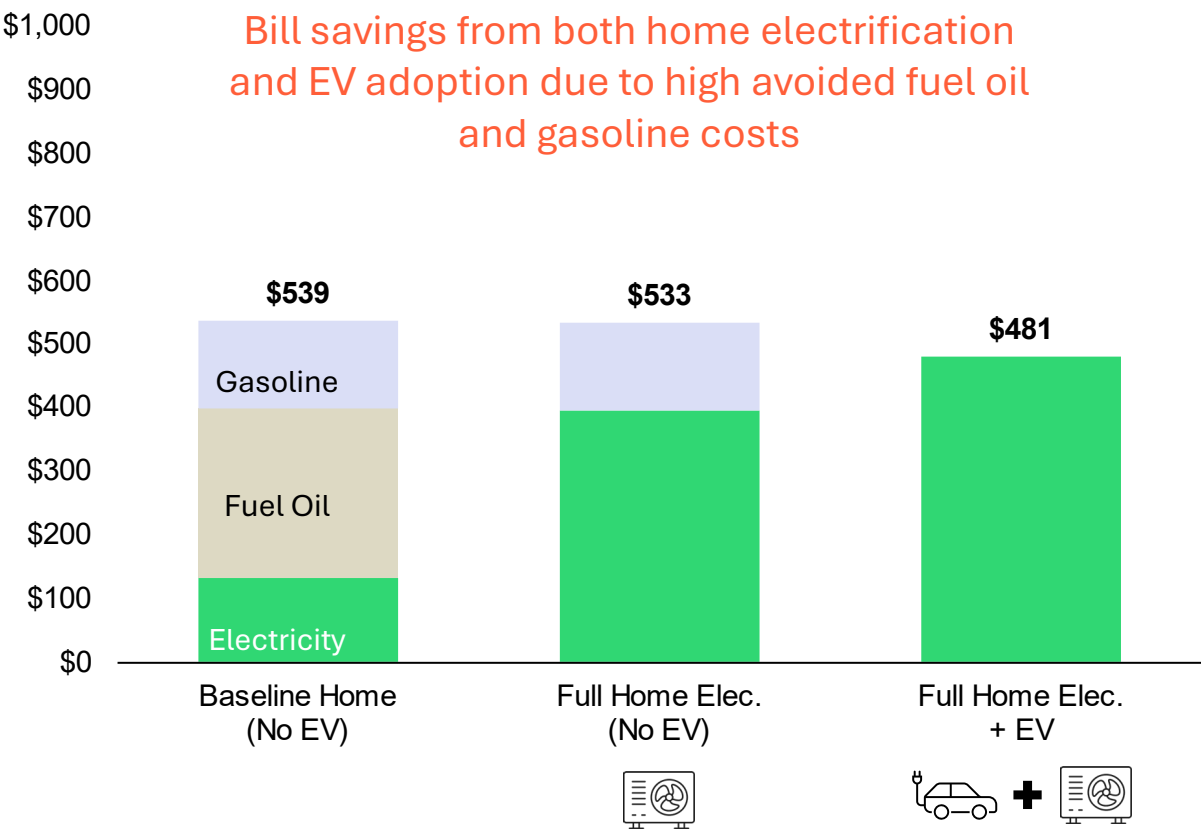
Fuel oil customers see bill savings from home electrification

~26% of MA homes heated by fuel oil

Pre-1970 Home with Fuel Oil Heating, No Bill Discount*

Monthly Avg. Energy Expenditure (Incl. Vehicle Use)

\$/mo

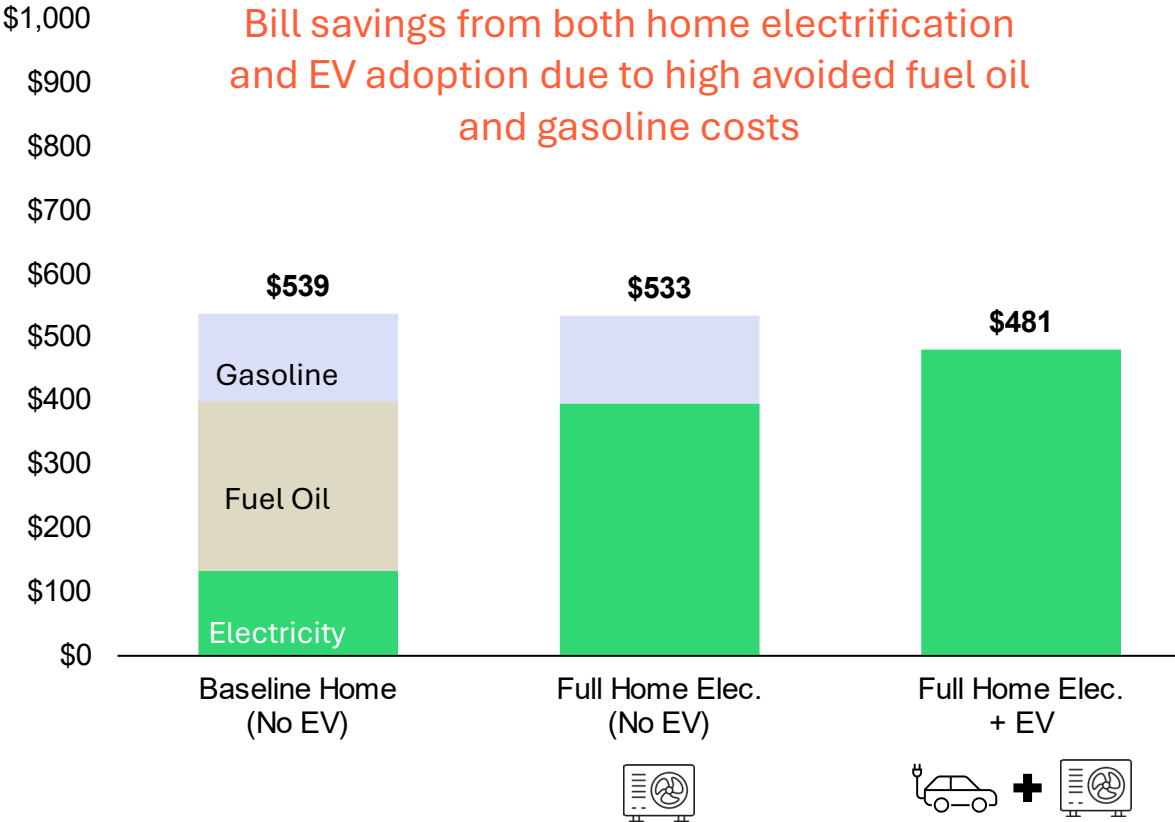


Fuel oil customers see bill savings from home electrification

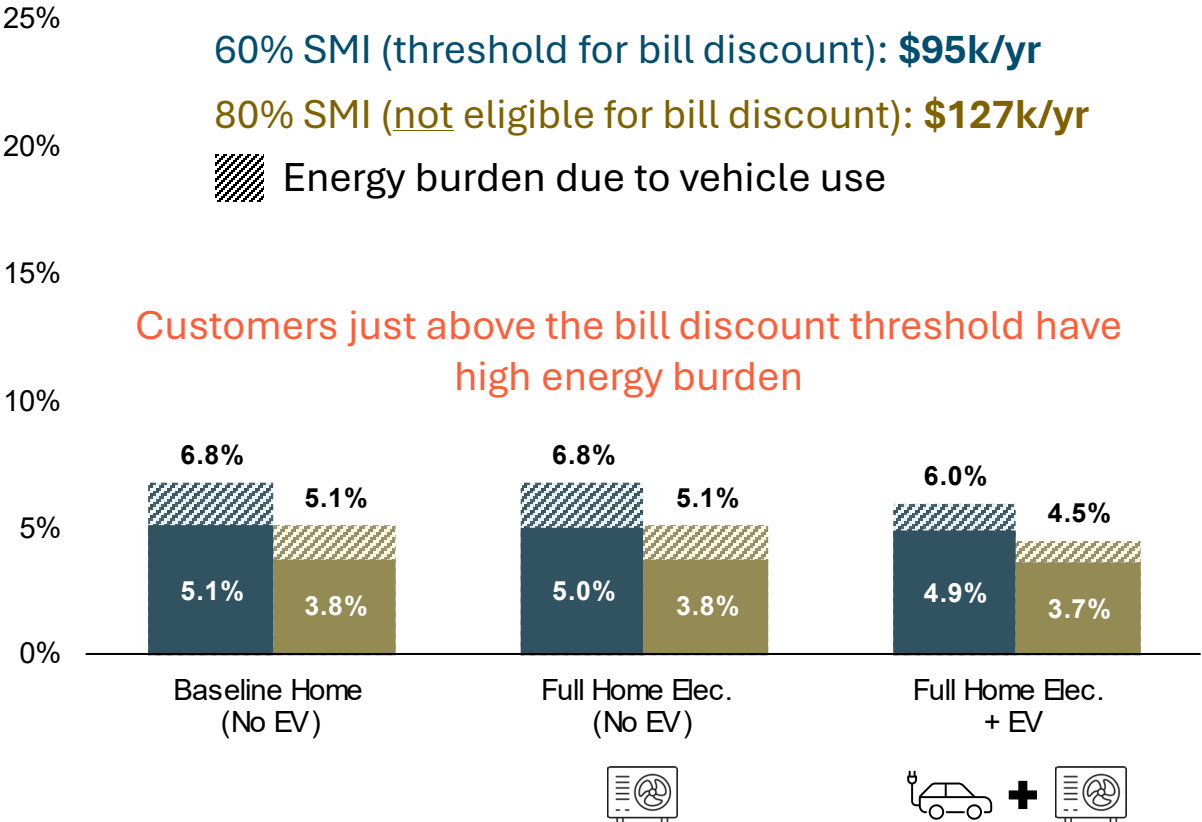
~26% of MA homes heated by fuel oil

Pre-1970 Home with Fuel Oil Heating, No Bill Discount*

Monthly Avg. Energy Expenditure (Incl. Vehicle Use)
\$/mo



Monthly Avg. Energy Burden (Incl. Vehicle Use)
% monthly income**

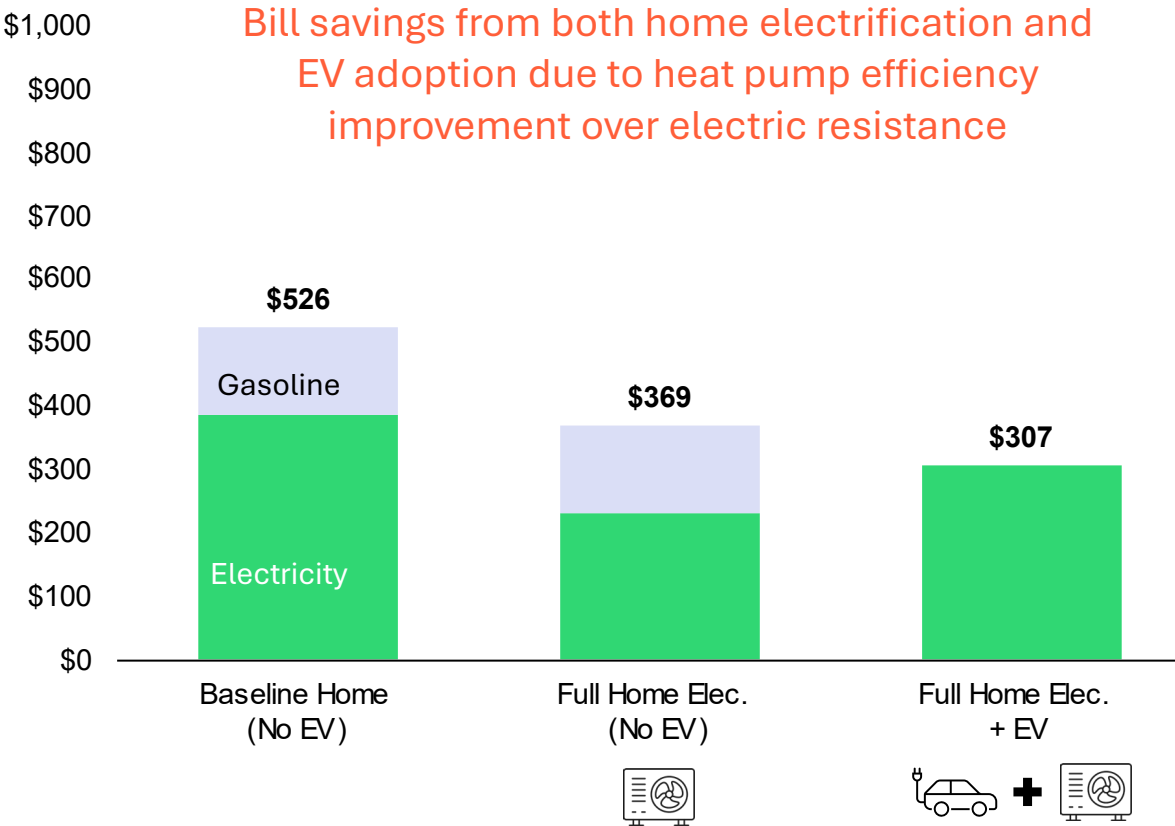


Heat pump efficiency gains drive bill savings for electric resistance customers

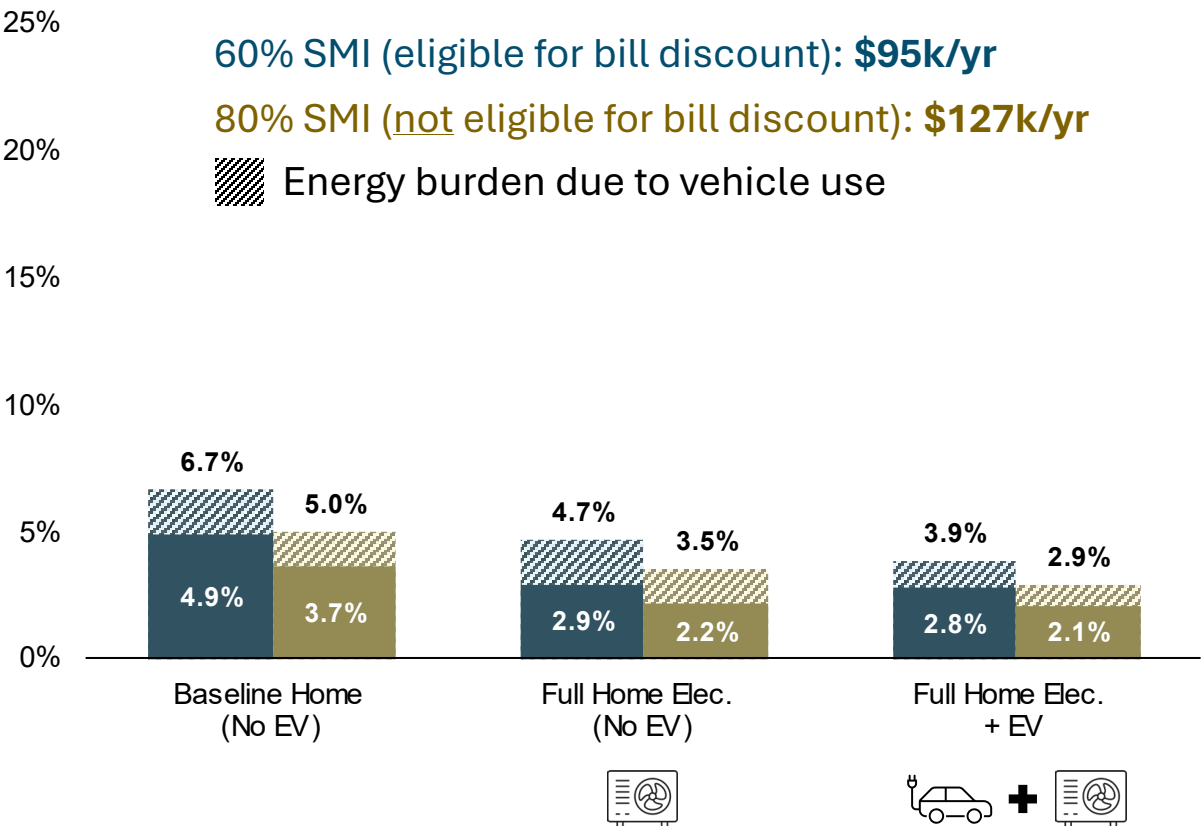
~13% of MA homes heated by electric resistance

Pre-1970 Home with Electric Resistance Heating, No Bill Discount*

Monthly Avg. Energy Expenditure (incl. Vehicle Use)
\$/mo



Monthly Avg. Energy Burden (incl. Vehicle Use)
% monthly income



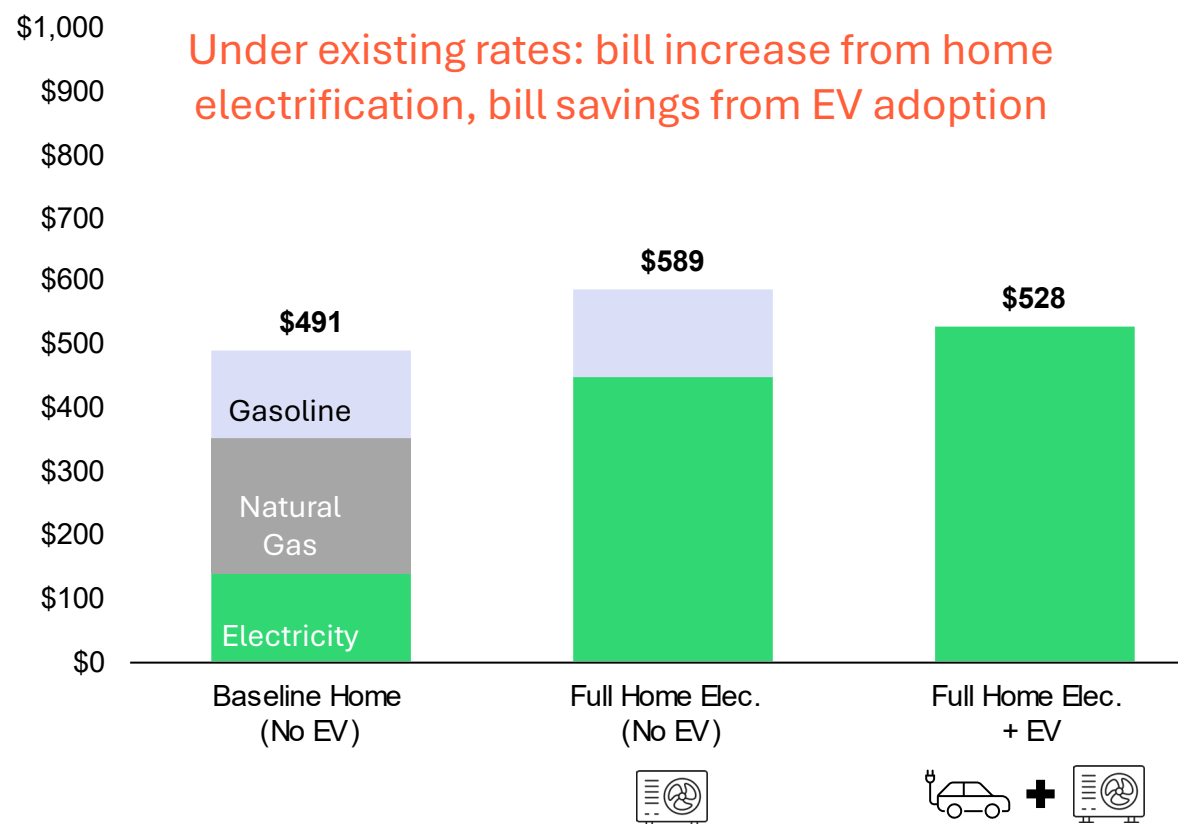
Natural gas customers face bill increases from electrification

~54% of MA homes heated by natural gas

Multifamily Home* with Natural Gas Heating, No Bill Discount

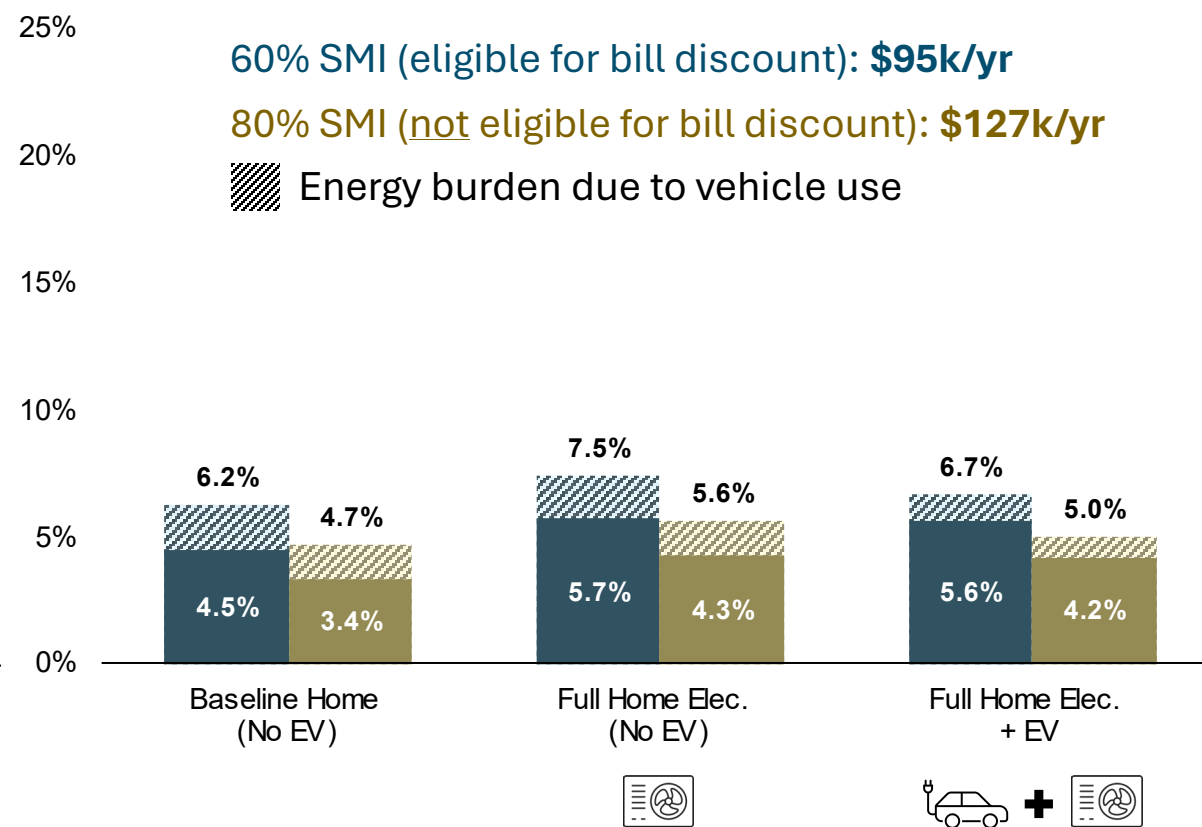
Monthly Avg. Energy Expenditure (incl. Vehicle Use)

\$/mo



Avg. Energy Burden (incl. Vehicle Use)

% monthly income



Near-Term Rate Design Alternatives



Energy+Environmental Economics

Core policy objectives have changed since the 1970s...

How can rate design keep up?

1970s through 2000s

Conservation as the overarching policy goal

- + Key rate design priority: **increase** volumetric rates to incentivize energy conservation
- + Rate design approaches include:
 - Volumetric pricing, with most costs recovered through a volumetric (c/kWh) charge
 - Very low fixed charges, as they do not encourage conservation
 - Inclining block pricing that increases the price of electricity at the margin

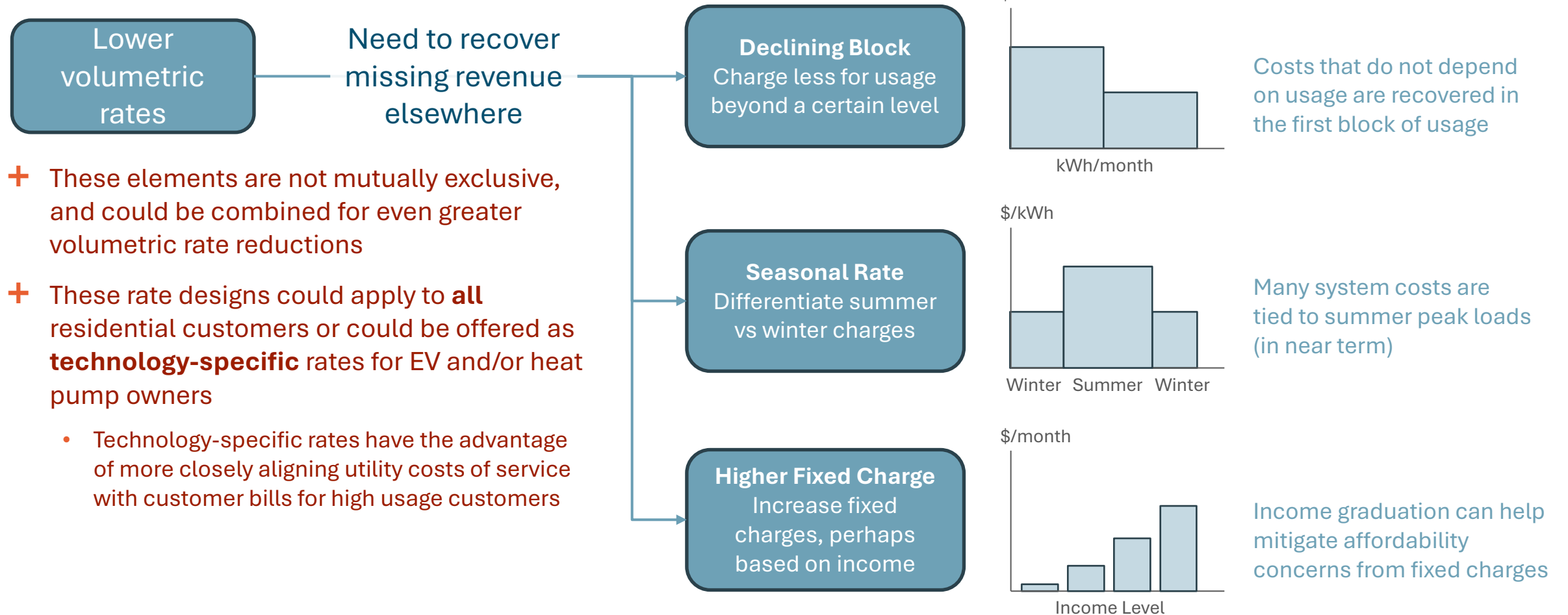
2020-2045:

Electrification as the overarching policy goal

- + Key rate design priority: **decrease** volumetric rates to decrease cost of heat pump usage and EV charging
- + Rate design approaches include:
 - Higher fixed charges that reduce the volumetric (c/kWh) rate
 - Declining block pricing that decreases the price of electricity at the margin
 - Seasonal rates that reduce prices in winter
 - Time-varying rates that provide lower prices for flexible technologies
 - Technology-specific rates that reflect different charges for electrified customers

Near-term options rely on reducing volumetric charges

In the near term (*i.e.*, before advanced metering infrastructure or AMI is widely adopted), time-varying rates are not on the table. Near-term options will rely on reducing the volumetric component of rates



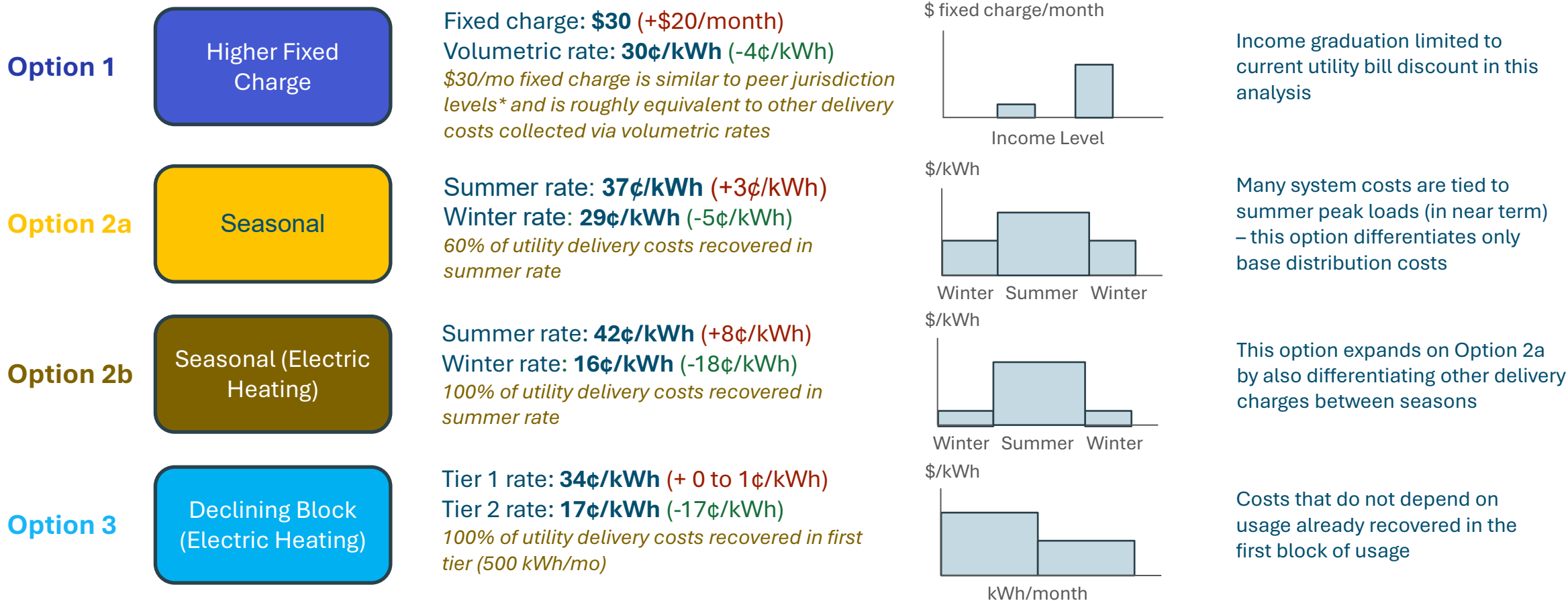
Example rates w/ advanced design elements

Utility	Rate Description	Design Elements	Details
San Diego Gas & Electric	Time-Varying-Rate (TVR) for Electric Vehicles	TVR, technology-specific, higher fixed charge + lower volumetric rate	3-period time-of-use rate
Salt River Project (SRP)	Residential Demand Price Plan Pilot	TVR, demand charge, higher fixed charge + lower volumetric rate	Volumetric rate about ½ of SRP's base TOU plan, demand charge is tiered to incentivize peak reduction
Central Maine Power	Seasonal Heat Pump Pilot	Seasonal, technology specific	For customers with heat pumps, volumetric charge is deeply reduced from November to April, with higher fixed charge compared to basic service rate
Versant Power (Maine)	Declining Block, Technology-Specific Rate	Tiered rate (declining), technology-specific	Lower volumetric charge above 600 kWh/mo. 50% of home heating needs must come from heat pump
California Investor-Owned Utilities	Income Graduated Fixed Charge (IGFC)	Higher fixed charge, lower volumetric rate	\$6 or \$12 fixed charge for income-eligible customers, \$24.15 for rest of state

Four alternative rates were modeled to explore the impacts of different rate design levers

Existing Eversource rate (status quo):
\$10/month fixed charge
34¢/kWh volumetric (17¢ delivery + 17¢ supply)

Each rate option (or lever) can be implemented without AMI and can be combined with other rate design levers



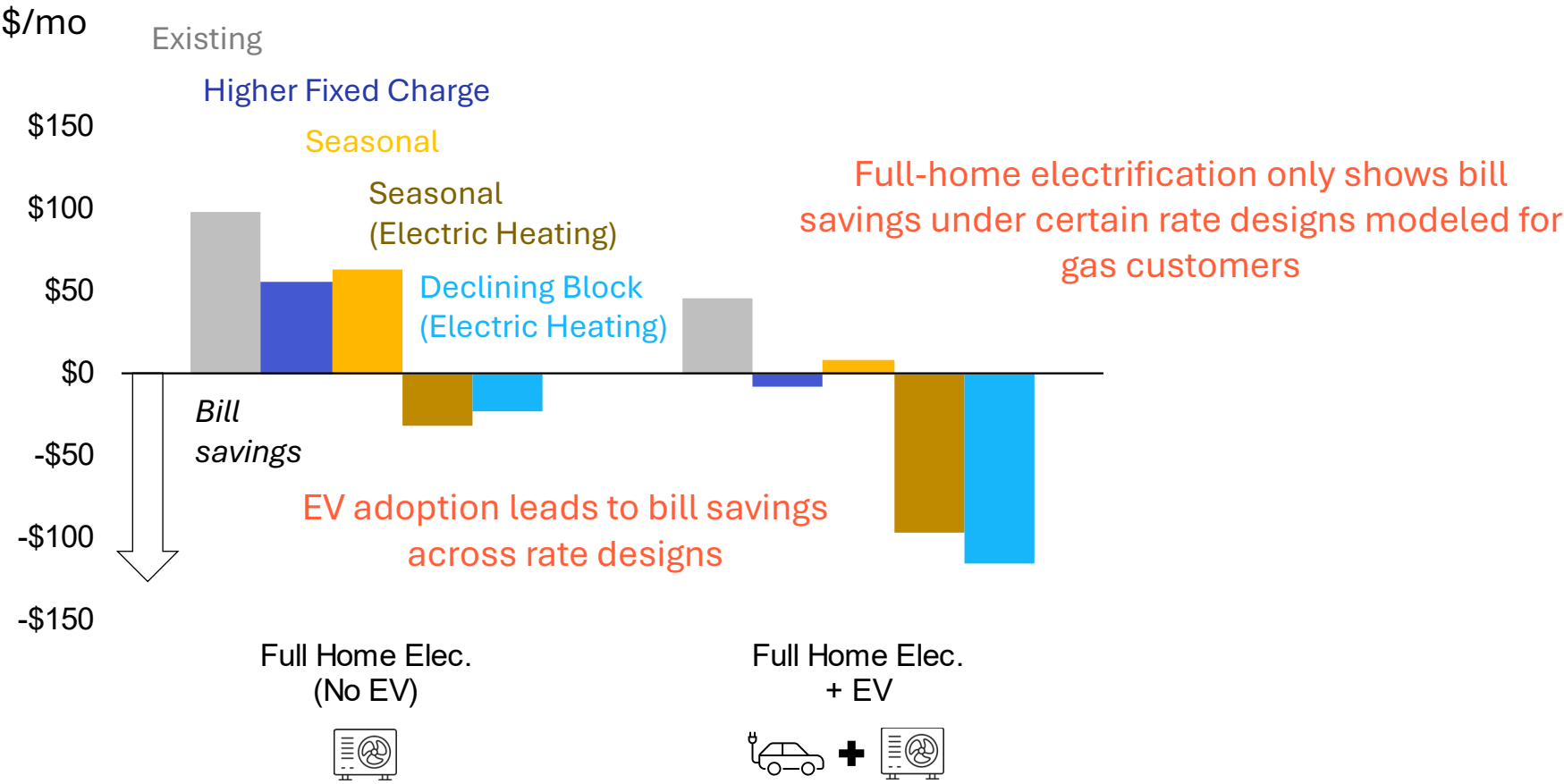
Heat pump rates can unlock bill savings for electrifying natural gas customers

Multifamily, Central MA, Room AC, 1700 sqft

~54% of MA homes heated by natural gas

Home with Natural Gas Heating, No Bill Discount

Change in Monthly Avg. Energy Expenditure, Relative to Fossil Baseline



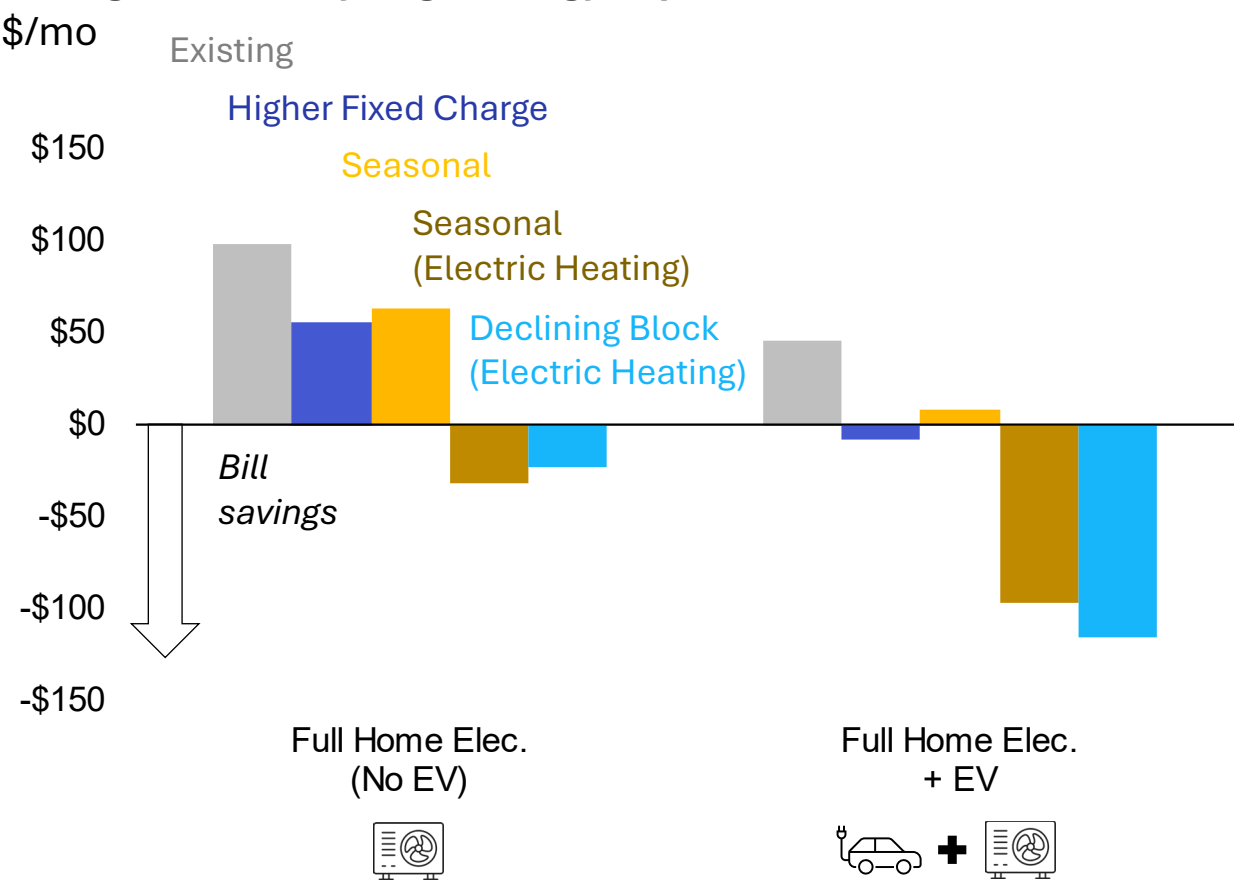
Universal rate design changes may lead to modest bill increases for non-electrifying customers

Multifamily, Central MA, Room AC, 1700 sqft

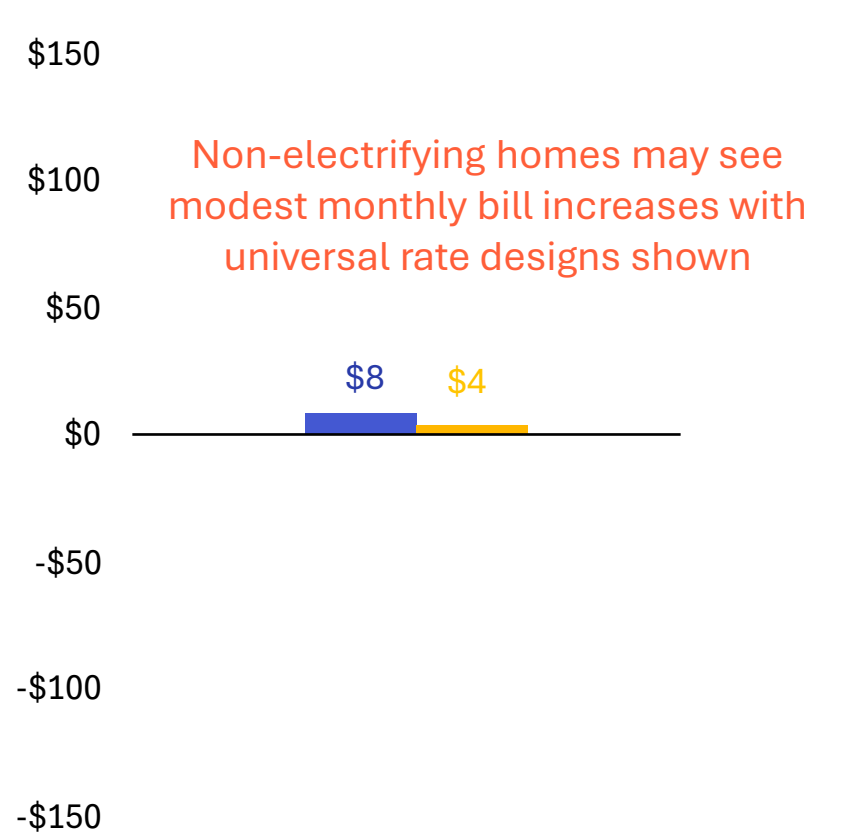
~54% of MA homes heated by natural gas

Home with Natural Gas Heating, No Bill Discount

Change in Monthly Avg.* Energy Expenditure, Relative to Fossil Baseline



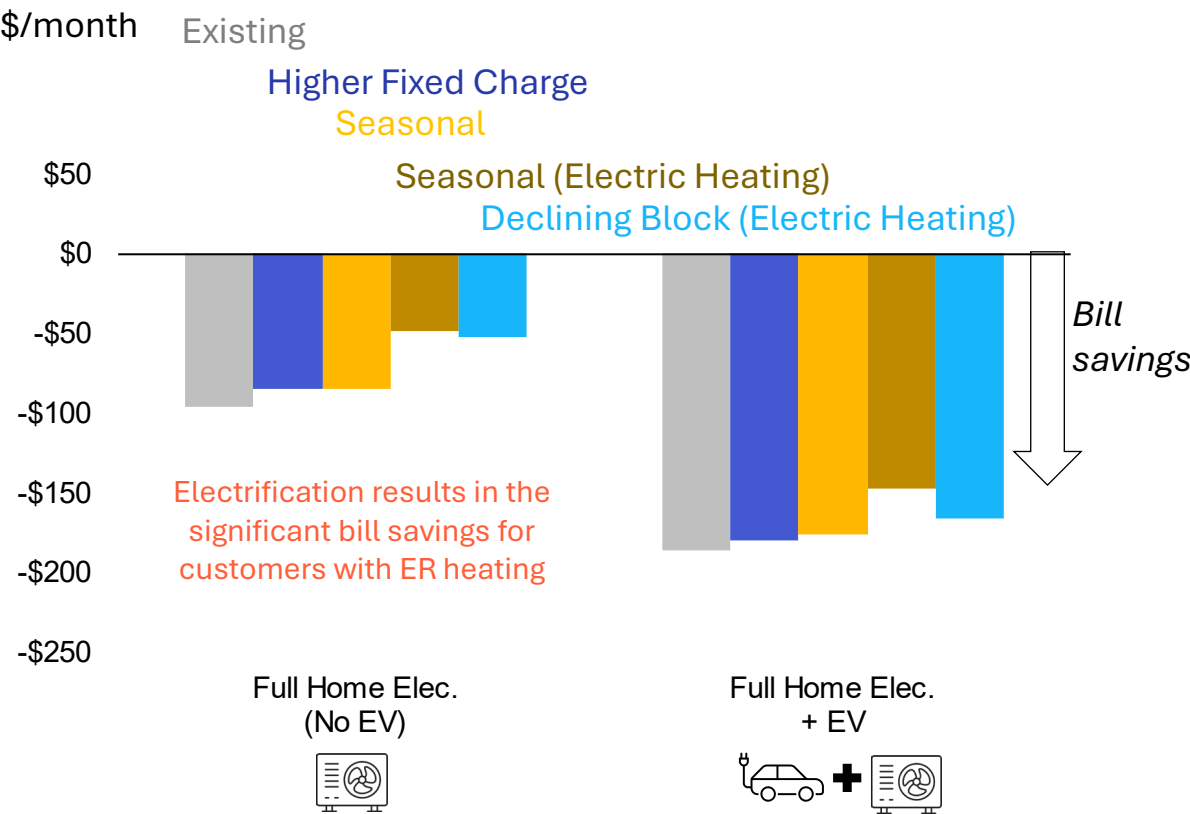
Change in Monthly Avg. Energy Expenditure, Relative to Existing Rates (\$/mo)



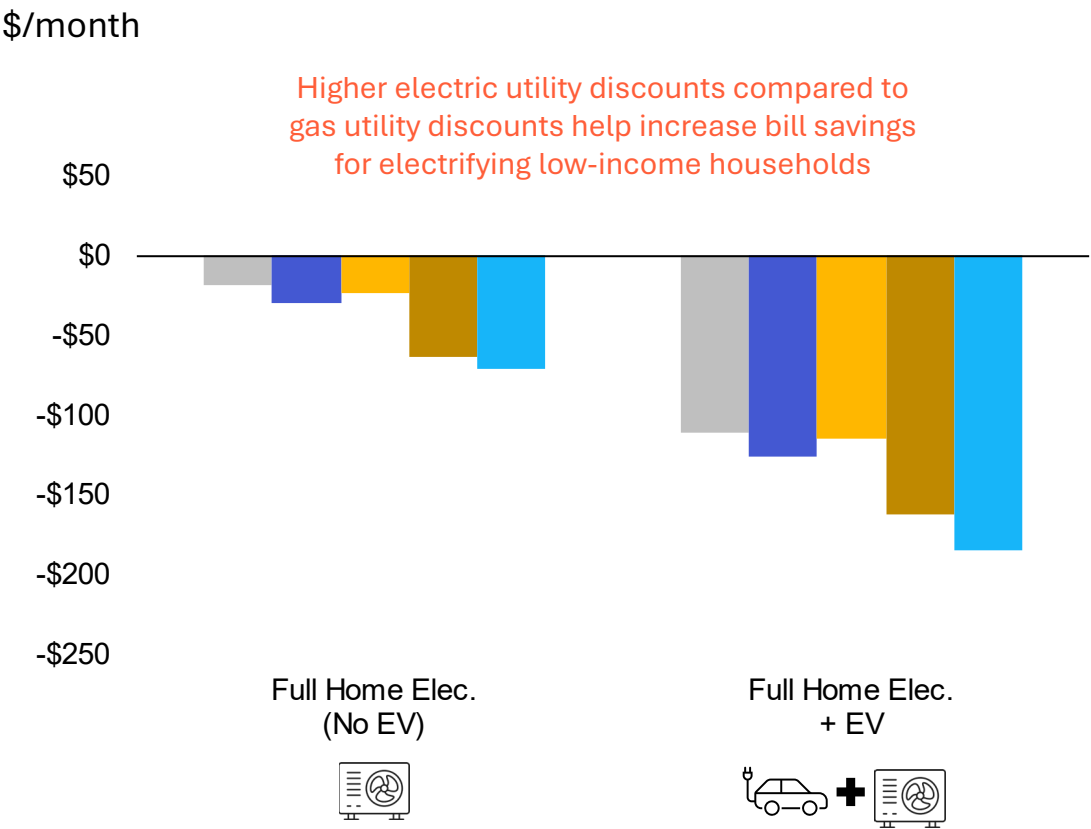
Modeled rate designs would yield significant benefits for low-income homes regardless of existing heating fuel

Change in Monthly Avg. Energy Expenditure for Electrifying Low-Income Customers, Relative to Baseline Heating

Pre-1960s Multifamily, Electric Resistance (ER) Heating (623 ft²)
Boston (Eversource)



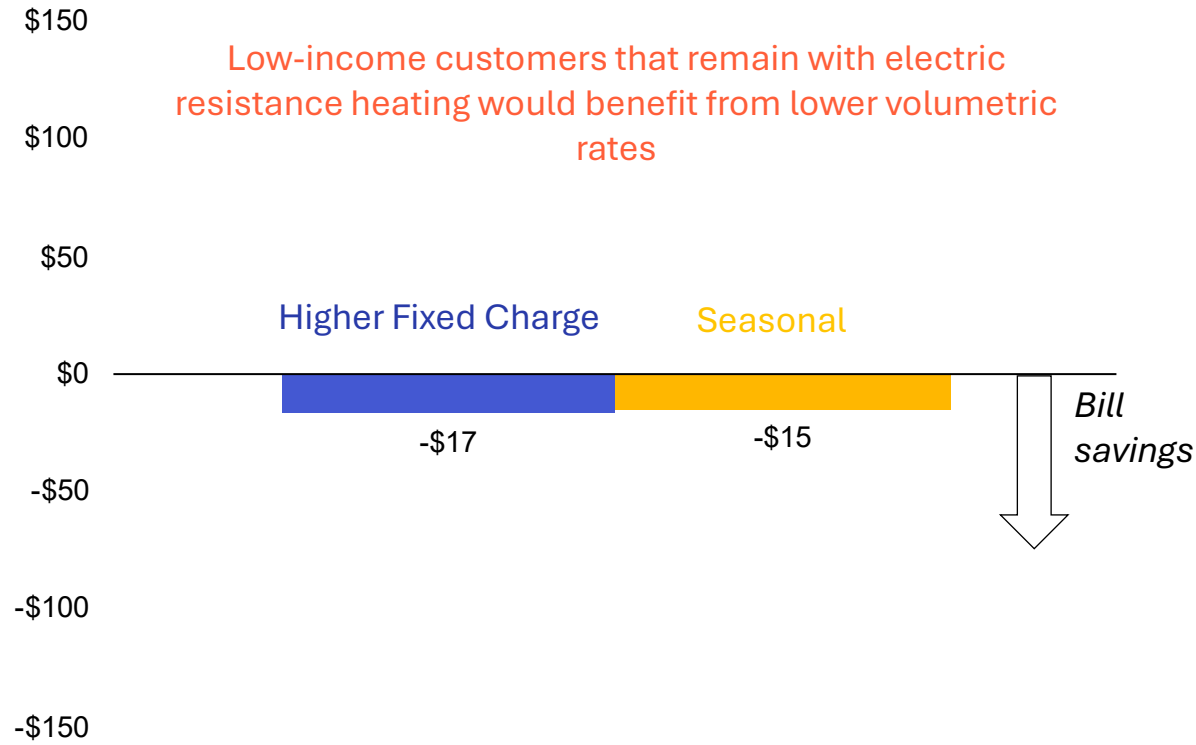
Pre-1960s Single Family, Gas Heating (1,228 ft²)
Western MA (Eversource)



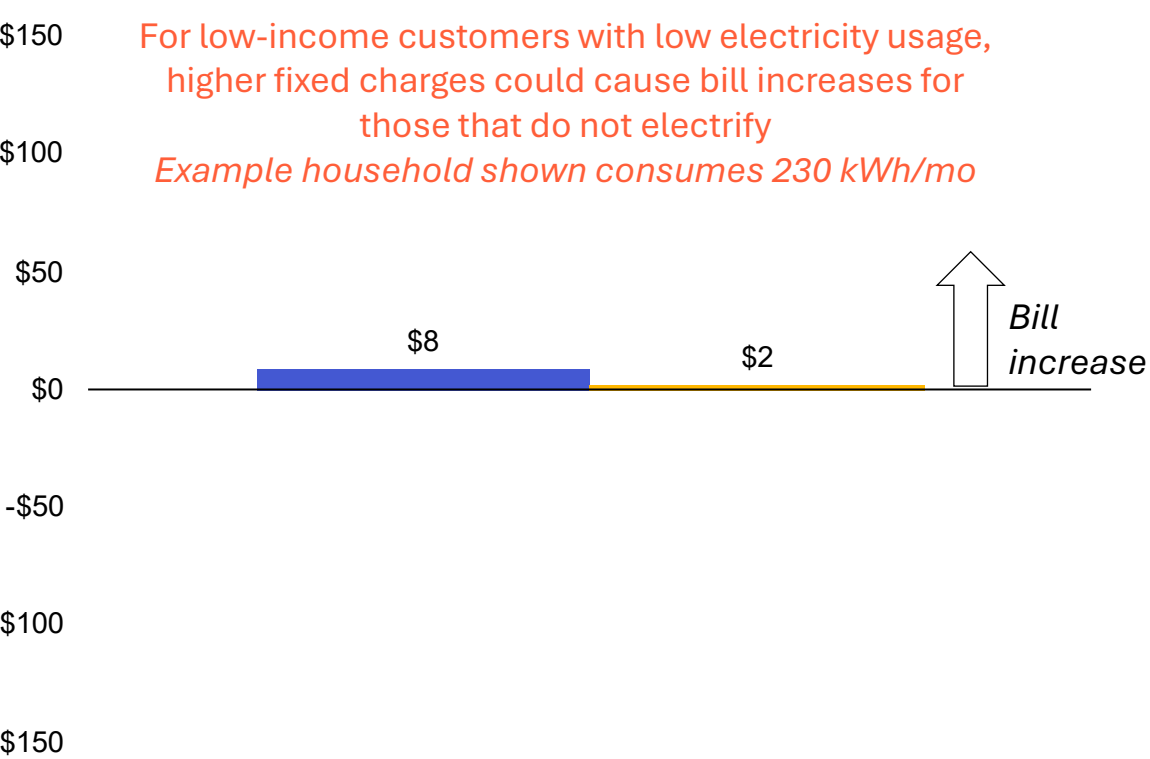
The bill impacts of universal rate changes on non-electrifying low-income customers vary by existing heating fuel

Change in Monthly Avg. Energy Expenditure for Non-Electrifying Low-Income Customers, Relative to Existing Rates

Pre-1960s Multifamily, Room AC, Electric Resistance Heating (623 ft²)
Boston (Eversource)
\$/month

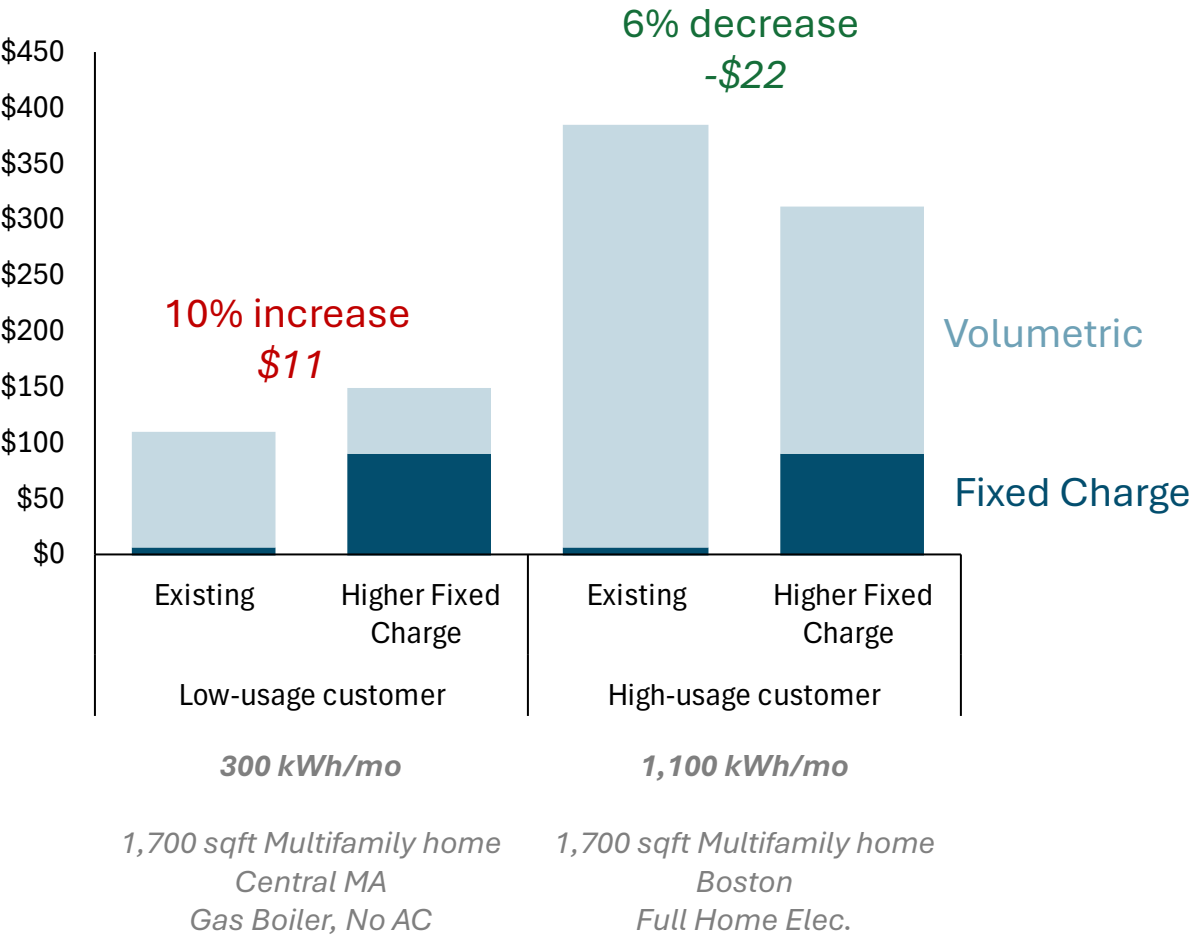


Pre-1960s Multifamily, No AC, Gas Heating (850 ft²)
Western MA (Eversource)
\$/month



Low usage customers would see small bill increases from universally raising fixed charges without income graduation

Monthly Avg. Electricity Bill
\$/mo

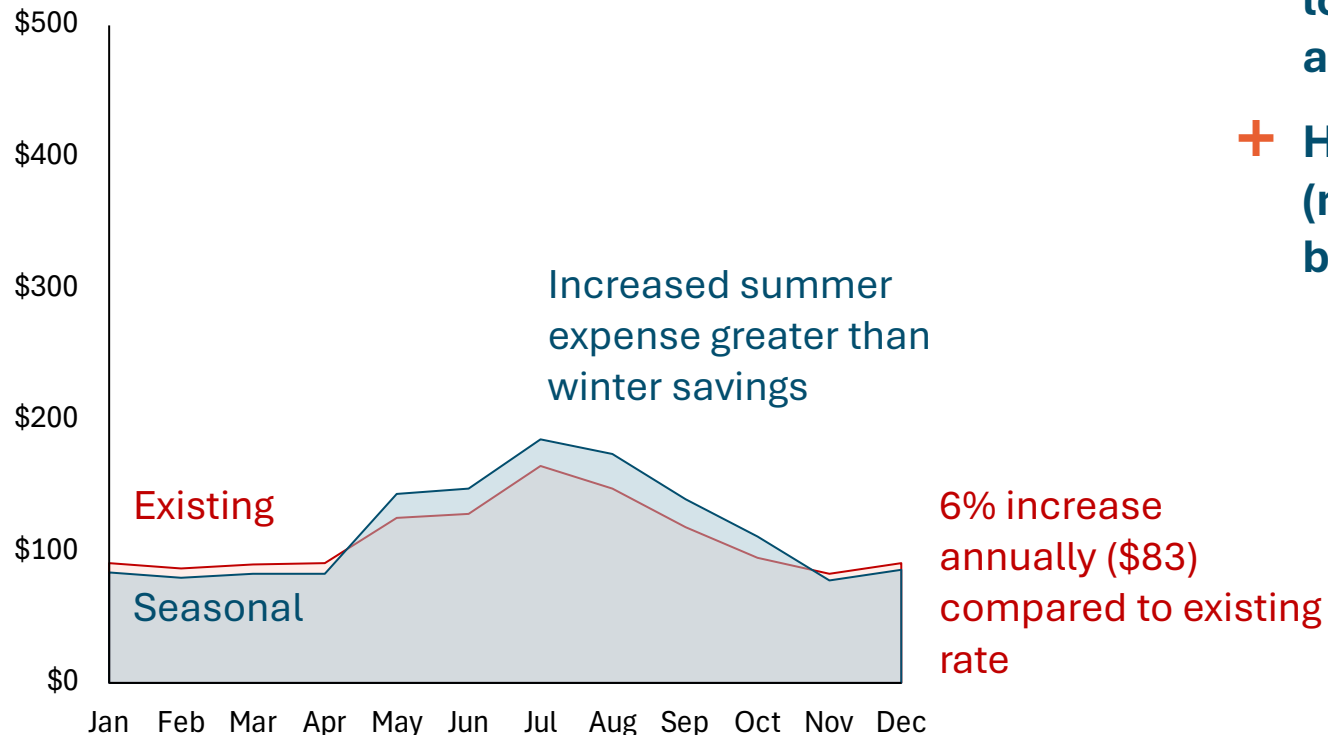


- + Smaller homes with low electricity usage* would face bill increases from expanded fixed charges
 - Lower consumption would translate to lower absolute \$ bill increases but higher % increases in expenditure
- + Income-graduated fixed charges could help avoid bill increases for low-income customers
 - Existing bill discount programs could be used as a starting point to implement lower fixed charges for eligible customers

Customers with high AC load would see bill increases from universal seasonal rates

Small Multifamily Home, Western MA
Natural Gas Baseline with Room AC

Monthly Avg. Electricity Bill
\$/mo

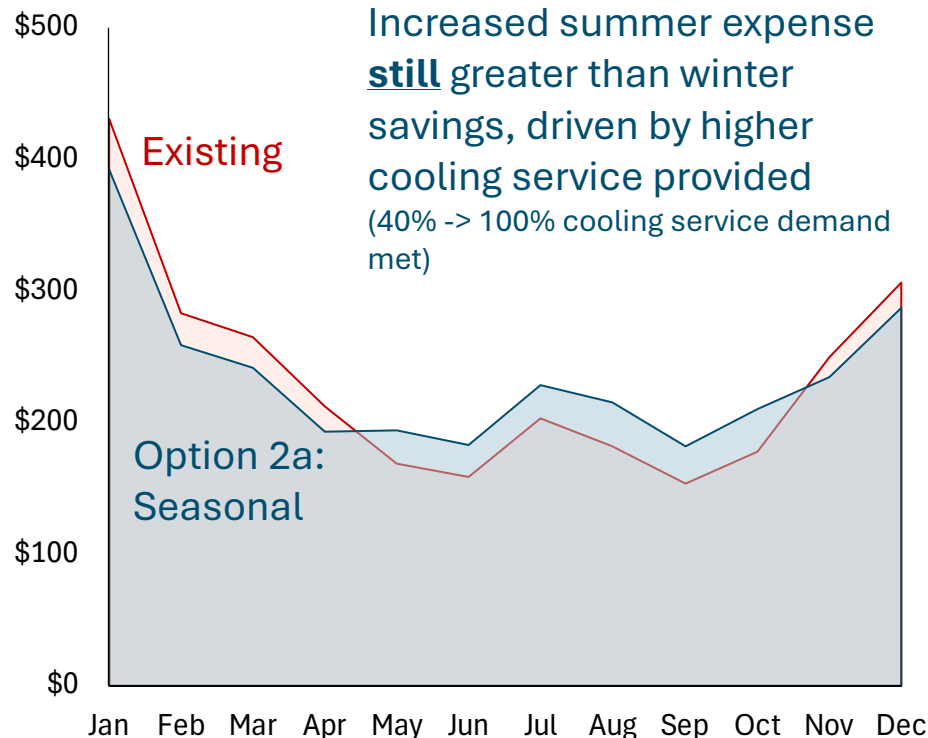


- + Homes with “peaky” summer AC usage (i.e. high summer load compared to rest of year) would see largest % increases in bills
- + Larger homes with high air conditioning load would see the largest \$ increases from adoption of higher summer rates
- + Homes adopting with electric heating (resistance or heat pump) would see biggest benefits

Greater winter discounts are needed to encourage heat pump adoption

Small Multifamily Home, Western MA
Fully Electrified

Monthly Avg. Electricity Bill
\$/mo



1% increase annually (\$30)
compared to electrification
under existing rate

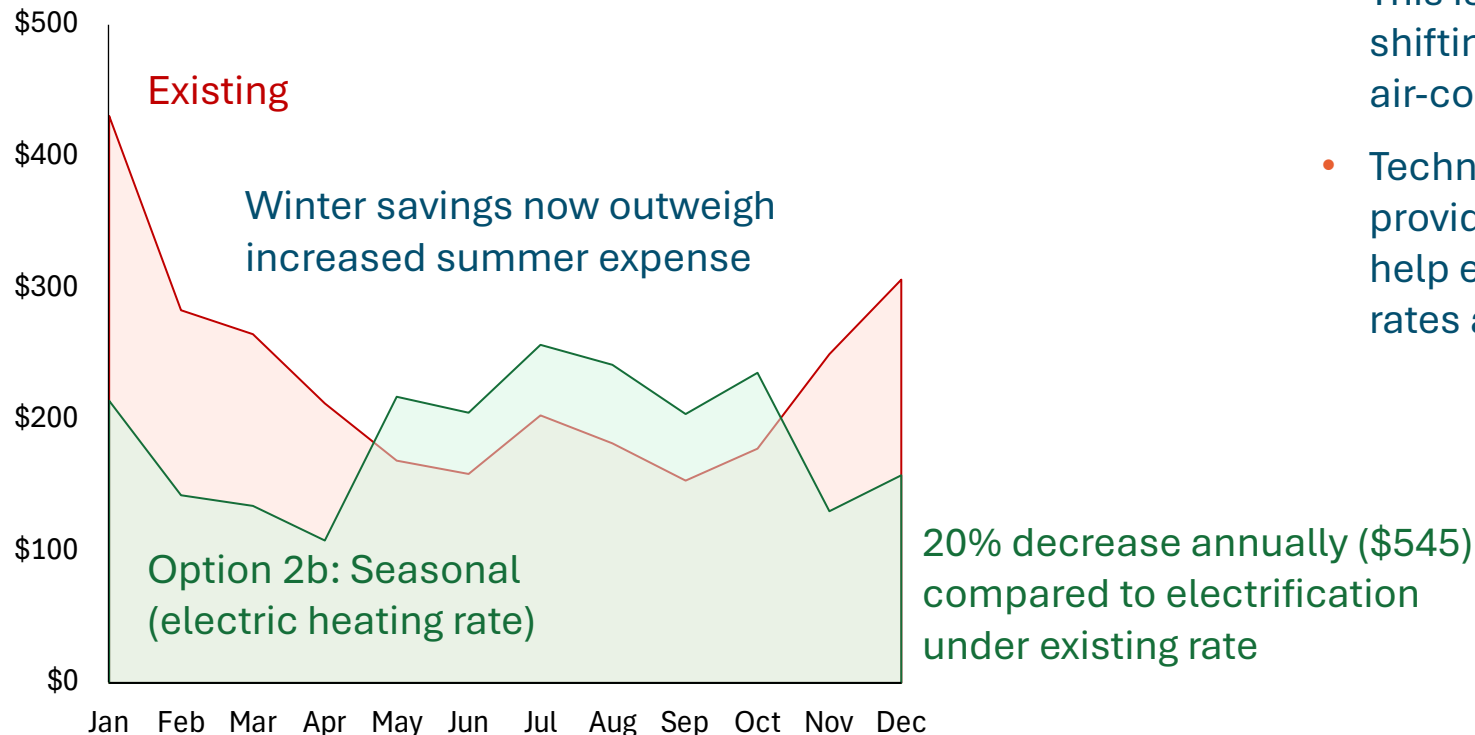
+ Customers adopting heat pumps would need to see more significant winter savings to be able to offset summer air conditioning expense

- This is especially applicable to customers shifting from no air-conditioning or limited room air-conditioning to whole home heat pumps

Greater winter discounts are needed to encourage heat pump adoption

Small Multifamily Home, Western MA
Fully Electrified

Monthly Avg. Electricity Bill
\$/mo



+ Customers adopting heat pumps would need to see more significant winter savings to be able to offset summer air conditioning expense

- This is especially applicable to customers shifting from no air-conditioning or limited room air-conditioning to whole home heat pumps
- Technology-specific heat pump rates that provide deeply discounted winter heating would help ensure bill savings relative to both existing rates and fossil fuel baseline technology

Each rate lever comes with pros and cons when considered individually

	Higher Fixed Charge	Seasonal	Seasonal (Tech-specific)	Declining block (Tech-specific)
Electrification Affordability			No impact on EV bill affordability	
Baseline Affordability	Beneficial if using graduated fixed charges	High cost for summer AC	N/A	N/A
Alignment with Cost of Service		Rising winter peak will flip seasonality		
Unintended Consequences			NEM customers may be over-credited during summer	Weakens signal for summer conservation
Ease of implementation	Politically challenging			

Implementation Considerations and Key Takeaways



Energy+Environmental Economics

Key takeaways – electrification and affordability

Current rates

- + Customers currently heating with electric resistance are guaranteed to see bill savings upon installing a heat pump – often up to \$150 per month**
 - This is a common heating arrangement for low-income residents in multifamily buildings, where electrification could reduce energy burden by ~3%
- + Customers currently heating with oil tend to see bills decrease slightly upon installing a heat pump**
- + Customers currently heating with gas tend to see bill increases upon installing a heat pump – often up to \$100 per month**
 - This is a common heating arrangement for low-income households, where electrification could increase energy burden by ~2%
- + Vehicle electrification tends to reduce customer bills, but not enough to offset bill increases for gas customer electrification**
 - Limited access to at-home charging for multifamily residents could push them to using higher cost public charging options however
 - Existing rebates for managed charging provide relatively small savings
- + Increased access to cooling will benefit residents who electrify, though this may contribute a small amount to bill increases**
 - This is especially relevant for low-income households, most of which tend to not have central air conditioning today
- + Shell improvements reduce heating and cooling demand, and can offset bill increases for gas customer electrification currently living in older homes**

Key takeaways – electrification and affordability

Near-term rate alternatives

- + **Higher fixed charges, seasonal variation, and declining block structures better align rates with utility costs of service compared to existing flat volumetric retail rates**
- + **Changing basic service rates for all customers is limited by a desire for gradualism and minimizing bill increases for non-electrifying customers**
 - Volumetric rate reductions of less than 5¢/kWh reduce electric heating bills meaningfully, but cannot overcome the bill increase of electrifying a gas household
 - Impacts on electrification bill savings could be improved by combining mechanisms: The suppression of volumetric charges by a high fixed charge can create headroom for shifting more costs from winter into summer
 - This can mitigate impacts on low-income customers who already struggle with high summer bills
 - Higher fixed charges and seasonal rates can also combine with incentive programs and future time-varying rates to create improved electrification incentives
 - Impacts of high fixed charges on low usage customers can be mitigated with income-graduated fixed charges
- + **Technology-specific rates allow for larger changes to volumetric rates and significant bill savings under electrification, but come with their own challenges**
 - A seasonal rate with cheaper winter prices would need to be phased out as a winter peak arises
 - A declining block rate provides a reduced conservation signal during the summer when the system is most stressed

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Please use the “raise hand” function on Zoom if you have a comment you wish to make on behalf of yourself or your organization, we will operate on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Speakers will be asked to identify themselves by name and affiliation and will have up to 2 minutes to comment.
- Written comments are also welcome and encouraged! Please send written comments to Rates.WG@mass.gov. All written comments will be considered public and may be posted on the IRVWG website. **Written comments on the Near-Term Rate Strategy Draft Report are due by September 6, 2024 to give sufficient time for consideration and should be sent to Rates.WG@mass.gov**



FUTURE STAKEHOLDER OPPORTUNITIES

- The IRWVG is hosting workshops to discuss further subject matter specific topics in greater detail
 - **August 19, 11-12PM:** Electric distribution companies, utilities, suppliers
 - **August 22, 2-3PM:** Consumer and advocacy organizations
 - **August 23, 1-2PM:** Distributed generation/distributed energy resource developers/providers
 - **September 4, 1-2PM:** Synthesis for all stakeholders
- Register for these sessions at [IRWVG's Outreach and Engagement Opportunities](#)





THANK YOU!

MASSACHUSETTS INTERAGENCY RATES WORKING GROUP

A Collaboration to Advance Near- and Long- Term Rate Designs that Align with the
Commonwealth's Decarbonization Goals

