



Portland General Electric
121 SW Salmon Street · Portland, Ore. 97204

February 4, 2019

To: Chair Power
Vice-Chair Bonham
Rep. Sollman
Rep. Helm
Rep. Reschke

Rep. Salinas
Rep. Schouten
Rep. Brock-Smith
Rep. Wilde

From: Sunny Radcliffe, Portland General Electric

Re: Support for House Bill 4067

Dear Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to express Portland General Electric's support for House Bill 4067. Reliable, resilient, affordable and increasingly clean electricity is an essential service that plays a critical role in the vitality, health and safety of Oregon, and in achieving the clean energy future envisioned by many of the families, businesses and the communities we serve.

PGE is working with our customers and partners to build a clean and reliable energy future that brings everyone along. Keeping our rates affordable and supporting programs that seek to reduce energy burden¹ are top priorities in our planning and decision-making. While there are existing resources to support low-income customers such as low-income bill assistance and home weatherization programs, which customers pay for on their bills, we strongly believe new tools are needed. Currently, almost one in five of our residential customers have trouble paying their bills each month, and roughly 20% of these customers receive bill assistance. This issue is not unique to PGE. As found in the "Reducing the Ten-Year Energy Burden in Oregon Affordable Housing²," energy burden is felt in every community across the state and one that needs more attention and study.

Rooted in the recommendations from the Oregon Public Utility Commission's Senate Bill 978 (2017) report, House Bill 4067 seeks to improve equitable and affordable access to energy services by:

- Providing support for more voices to have meaningful representation in processes at the OPUC, and
- Giving the OPUC the authority to consider differential energy burdens on different classes of customers and investigate ways to mitigate those differentials by non-bypassable means, which could include rate design to help reduce bills for low-income customers. In reducing energy burden, we also recognize the importance of programs and policies like energy efficiency, weatherization, and other technologies which can provide other benefits including health, comfort, safety, resiliency, and/or reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

As the energy landscape continues to evolve to meet the needs of the future, it is critical that the regulatory environment also evolve to ensure affordable, accountable, reliable and increasingly clean service for all customers and communities. House Bill 4067 will help support this evolution. PGE urges your support.

Respectfully submitted,

Sunny Radcliffe
Director, Government Affairs and Environmental Policy, Portland General Electric

¹ Energy burden describes the percentage of household income that goes toward energy costs, looking specifically at utility bills. Families who pay a higher proportion of their income to utility bills, may have to make trade-offs between heating or cooling their homes and other necessities including food, medicine and child care. The higher energy burdens can be explained by lower incomes, less energy efficient housing, and limited access to energy efficiency and weatherization programs (The Oregon Energy Fund <https://www.oregonenergyfund.org/oregon-energy-burden-study/>)

² "Ten Year Plan: Reducing Energy Burden in Oregon Affordable Housing," Oregon Department of Energy, Oregon Public Utilities Commission, Oregon Housing and Community Services, pg. 17 (2018)