February 4, 2020

Chair Power, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 4067 to increase the participation of ratepayers who are underrepresented in utility regulation and to help reduce energy burden for families struggling to pay their bills. My name is Alberto Gallegos and I am a political organizer with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Oregon State Council. SEIU Oregon is composed of SEIU Local 503 and SEIU Local 49, which together represent over 85,000 people who provide valuable services to our local communities and our state; ranging from care providers and non-profit staff to state workers and higher ed personnel. We are the largest union in Oregon, and nationally we are the largest union with 2.1 million members.

The majority of our members come from low-income families; the very same families that are currently struggling--month in, month out--to pay their utility bills without the proper representation when it comes to regulations. Low-income families' inability to afford homes with high-energy efficiency forces them to live in low-energy efficient homes, which in turn raises the cost of their utility bills. This is the vicious cycle of poverty that HB 4067 will help address.

Furthermore, the Portland Water Bureau has a similar program that has proven to be successful in which they provide reduced rates for low-income families and educate them on their water consumption. As with HB 4067, this does not break the cycle of poverty, but it is a step in the right direction. Please stand in unity with our members by supporting House Bill 2614.

On behalf of our members, I want to thank the committee and the sponsors of House Bill 4067 for giving this legislation due consideration in service to your constituencies and all Oregonians.

Thank you,

Alberto Gallegos
Political and Government Relations Organizer
SEIU, Oregon State Council

1-800-955-3352
MAIN OFFICE

503-238-6692
FAX

3536 SE 26TH AVE
PORTLAND, OR 97202

@SEIU49
TWITTER

SEIU LOCAL 49
FACEBOOK

WWW.SEIU49.ORG