

## **SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

### **HB 2739**

#### **Relating to utility ratepayer assistance**

---

To: Ways and Means Full Committee  
From: Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee  
Carrier: Representative Gomberg

---

The Oregon Energy Assistance Program is an anti-poverty program for low-income eligible customers of Oregon's two largest electric utilities, Portland General Electric and Pacific Power. The purpose of the program is to reduce service disconnections for customers at risk of having their electricity shut off. PGE and Pacific Power customers support this program through a meter charge included on their electric bills. The rate is approximately \$0.69 per meter per month for residential customers and not more than \$500 for commercial and industrial customers. The Housing and Community Services Department allocates these funds to Community Action Agencies, which then deliver support to eligible customers.

HB 2739 temporarily increases this meter charge to assist households affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This increase will begin January 1, 2022 and will sunset January 2, 2024. The Public Utility Commission is responsible for determining the right rate distribution for collection of these funds. PUC can do this work with existing resources.

The recommended amendment provides a \$15 million Other Funds limitation for the Housing and Community Services Department to expand the Oregon Energy Assistance Program.

The Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee recommends HB 2739 be amended by the -A3 amendment and be reported out do pass, as amended.