

Good afternoon; neighbors, community members and Committee Members;

My name is Michael Lenihan. I am here to testify about HB 2475, and would appreciate your time and attention while myself and others testify here today. Today is a major step after hours and hours of effort.

HB 2475 directs Public Utility Commissions to create a comprehensive classification of services for low income and disenfranchised utility users. I am here testifying as a lifelong Oregonian, a Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians tribal Member, and as a member of the Energy Justice Leadership Institute

Having lived in this state all of my life, and through several community level tragedies, especially in the last six years I have seen that Oregonians fight for those that need help the most; wildfire victims, those affected by tragic acts of violence, and those in need. Today we have a chance to embrace that spirit and help those who need it most. People who are going to sleep cold and without power, and people who can't work from home or distance learn because of financial burdens in a long term and secure fashion. This bill places no extra cost to your constituents by our government. This bill creates opportunities for utility companies to better serve at risk and disenfranchised Oregonians; supporting your constituents who need help the most. Especially as the end of Oregon's Utility Moratorium draws near.

The Federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) assists eligible low-income households with their heating and cooling energy costs, bill payment assistance, energy crisis assistance, weatherization and energy-related home repairs. However; this program doesn't serve every Oregonian's needs well enough. It is our job to fill that gap, not just via emergency stimulus.

Thank you Committee Members, Community Members, Legislative staff, and to all of my neighbors for making Oregon such a wonderful place to live and grow. I look forward to seeing this bill pass through this committee, and to soon be signed into law.

Sincerely;

Mx. Michael Lenihan