

Testimony for HB 2475  
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US Dept of Energy and other agencies have documented that low-income households spend a larger portion of their income on home energy costs than other households. We know, in Oregon, that people who work for minimum wage have trouble making their paychecks stretch across rents or mortgage, food, health care and utilities, and that is all of the time, not just when the pandemic has caused so many people to lose their jobs. **Right now, the programs available to the utilities to help low-income ratepayers have limited funding.**

You have an opportunity to address this problem. HB 2475 will allow the PUC to structure rates that will **consistently provide relief** for low and moderate-income ratepayers. At least 11 other states already have such rate structures in place, so there are good models for the PUC to follow.

HB2475 will also make funding possible for representatives of low-income ratepayers to participate in regulatory processes so that the PUC can learn how best to meet their needs.

Energy efficiency improvements is another important way for low-income households to reduce their utility bills, but again, funding is limited. Other legislation you'll see this year will address some of that problem. **Right now, I urge you to move HB 2475 out of Committee with a Do Pass recommendation.**