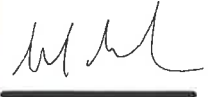


VOTE YES ON HB 3792

HELP FAMILIES PAY THEIR ELECTRIC BILLS

From the desk of Representative Mark Gamba



THE OREGON ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The legislature created the Oregon Energy Assistance Program (OEAP) in 1999 to help Portland General Electric (PGE) and Pacific Power households pay some or all of past due bills to avoid disconnection. To receive OEAP, a household must be at or below 60% of the state median income. **Households on fixed incomes, families with kids, and those with disabilities receive priority.**

WHAT WILL HB 3792 DO?

HB 3792 will increase funding for OEAP from \$20 million per year to \$40 million. It will double the contribution cap from large customers from \$500 to \$1,000 per site, as negotiated with the industrial customer advocate. **OEAP is funded by a small charge on PGE and Pacific Power utility bills.** PGE households currently pay \$0.60/month, and Pacific Power customers pay \$0.69/month. HB 3792 would essentially double this existing charge to get more families the support they need.

WHY IS HB 3792 NEEDED NOW?

OEAP funding has not permanently increased in 9 years, except for a temporary increase during the COVID pandemic that expired in 2024. **OEAP is not tied to inflation and has not kept pace with rising costs and growing needs.**

Meanwhile, PGE and Pacific Power rates for households have increased by 50% since 2021. In 2024, we saw the highest number of disconnected households since reporting began in 2018—including households on PGE and Pacific Power bill discount programs. **Current OEAP funding does not meet community needs, which we expect to grow.** Moreover, the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is being threatened with delay, significant reduction, or outright elimination.

PGE and Pacific Power do not offer programs to relieve or manage utility debt, increasing shut off risk. OEAP helps households pay past due bills *and* get auto-enrolled in monthly bill discounts, **helping avoid near-term disconnection, while making future bills more affordable, reducing future risk of disconnection.**

WHO BENEFITS FROM THE OREGON ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM?

From fiscal years 2017-2022, of the 85,470 PGE and Pacific Power households who received OEAP:

- 52% had children at home
- 25% were single mothers
- 36% had a family member with a disability
- 79% were renters
- 6% were veterans
- 92% used the funds to avoid being disconnected

WE URGE A "YES" VOTE ON HB 3792

