



January 30, 2025

The Honorable John Lively
Chairman
House Climate, Energy, and Environment Committee
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Representative Lively,

I am writing today on behalf of the Alliance of Western Energy Consumers (AWEC). AWEC supports House Bill 2370, and the Oregon Public Utility Commission's (PUC) request for a fee increase.

AWEC is a non-profit organization comprised of some of the largest, most innovative and trusted employers in the west. AWEC provides a strong advocacy voice in shaping the dynamics of energy markets, natural gas markets, and regulatory policy. Our members provide tens of thousands of highly paid technical jobs. AWEC has a large and diversified base of members that represent industries such as agriculture, aeronautics, air products, pulp and paper, food processing, informational technology, healthcare and more.

AWEC supported Senate Bill 68 during the 2019 session, which was the last time this fee was increased. Given the increasing complexity of utility regulation, we believe this increase is necessary in order for the PUC to adequately address staffing levels that are critical to the work they do. House Bill 2370 would modify ORS 756.310 by increasing the annual utility fee. The increase would give the PUC flexibility to raise the fee from .45 percent up to .55 percent.

While this fee increase would modestly raise rates for customers, AWEC nevertheless supports it due to the increasing complexity and number of matters the PUC must address, and having qualified staff is essential to properly regulating utilities and ensuring that the rates charged to customers are not unjust and unreasonable. New funding would also allow the PUC to keep pace with inflation, and allow the PUC to meet obligations this biennium and beyond. We would encourage you to support House Bill 2370. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Bill Gaines".

Bill Gaines
Executive Director