

Submitter: Susan Lafferty
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Commerce and Consumer Protection
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3179

I support this bill. I am retired, my income is limited and stretched. We got a 2.5% Social Security COLA this year. How far do you think that went.

Something needs to be done to curtail these soaring costs for basic and necessary services specifically for residential customers and small businesses.. I conserve energy, but, even so, I moved to PGE's Time of Day rate structure in an attempt to keep my costs down. Since I am retired I have the luxury of being able to shift most of energy usage to off peak hours. However, many other people are not in the position to do so and are struggling just to support themselves and their families with all these rising costs.

While I understand the need for these utilities to make a profit, I question why it, once again, seems like we are subsidizing their largest users of energy consumption - which will only get worse with the data centers being built and the added strain it will put on the grid. And now with the potential impacts due to the staff reductions at the BPA. Can we look forward to (at best) rolling brown outs or black outs so our utilities can keep the lights on for their commercial sector? The utility companies need to be held more accountable for their business decisions if there is a conflict of interest between making a profit for their shareholders and ensuring affordable and well maintained power lines for the public sector who, I might add, have NO choice on who we want to provide us with electricity. The PUC needs more authority to demand more transparency, justification for rate increases and leeway in protecting our rights as consumers.

The only choice some of us will have to make, sooner or later, is to move if we get no relief. Out of Oregon. It is becoming more unaffordable to live here and will only get worse with more rate increases coming at us. I will be very sad if I have to leave this beautiful State I have called my home for over 45 years. Thank you for your time and consideration.