

Submitter: Judith Lienhard

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB88

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Judith Lienhard and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am writing in support of SB 88 to make sure that advertising, legal and lobbyist fees come out of company profits, not rate payer pockets.

I support SB 88 because:

When high energy bills force Oregonians to choose between turning their heat on in the winter or paying their rent, that's not resilience. High energy costs make us less resilient and can even turn deadly in climate disasters like heat waves and arctic storms. It's time utility companies stop tacking unnecessary, 'junk costs' onto our already high utility bills.

For-profit monopoly utilities need to tighten their belts like the rest of us. Things like expensive lawyers and lobbyists, advertising, and industry association fees should come out of company profits and not our pockets. These expenses can add up to millions of dollars of "junk" on our utility bills every year.

Oregon's largest for-profit utilities have raised customers' bills by about 50% in four years. At the same time, Oregonians are left shouldering the burden of climbing fossil fuel prices, growing costs of wildfire damages and handouts to large industrial consumers. We must take action to get utility rate hikes under control. SB 88 will make sure that advertising, legal and lobbyist fees come out of company profits, not customer pockets.

More than a dozen states are looking at legislation similar to SB 88, this year.

Colorado, Maine, and Connecticut have already passed laws to get the junk, like corporate lobbyist fees, out of customers' rates. Cutting unnecessary charges from our utility bills is an easy way for state leaders to deliver relief to working families and small businesses.

Thank you in advance for your support of SB 88.

Sincerely,  
Judith Lienhard