

Testimony for Senate Bill 88

Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Submitted By: Ella Allen

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Chair Janeen Sollman, Vice Chair David Brock Smith, and members of the committee, my name is Ella Allen, and I am a student at Willamette University. Though I am not currently living full time in Salem Oregon I will be by the end of this year. I support SB 88 to make sure that advertising, legal and lobbyist fees come out of company profits, not rate payer pockets.

It is **unfair** and **unethical** for multi-million-dollar energy companies to burden their customers with unnecessary costs. These added fees contribute to already high energy bills, narrowing access to the essential resource of electricity. People should not be faced with the impossible choice between paying their energy bills or paying rent.

In my hometown people do not get to choose the provider of their energy bills. There are two electric companies and based on geographical location, your household is assigned to either provider. A couple of years ago one of the providers finished construction on a massive business hub in a nearby city. As a result, customers' energy bills were raised by almost 25% in one calendar year, making rates much higher than those of the other electric company. Customers were left backed into a corner; with rates rising, some of my friends went without power for several weeks, which sparked danger in the cold South Dakota winter. This is unacceptable, and this bill could prevent similar situations here in Oregon, keeping communities safe.

Oregon energy companies have already doubled their rates over the last four years. This alone is enough to burden members of our community. With the added cost of "junk" fees Oregonians are paying the price for the corrupt economic ambitions of monopolized energy corporations.

As customers, we trust energy companies to charge us rates that reflect our energy use. When we pay our energy bills, we do not knowingly consent to these "junk" fees and the activities they fund. **Companies should not be able to charge us for their political or economic agendas, both of which we have no control over.** The activities of companies should be their sole economic responsibility. Charging customers is entirely unethical.

Companies, such as Portland General Electric (PGE) which provides energy for 44% of the inhabitants of Oregon, make more than enough money each year to support their economic endeavors. **PGE alone made \$313 million in profits in 2024**, a record high for the company, made possible by an increase in rates two years in a row.

SB 88 can take this increased, unethical cost burden off the backs of Oregonians, keeping them safe from the dangers of increased rates. Oregonians should never be faced with the choice between essential energy bills and other fees that directly impact their quality of life.

Please join me in supporting SB 88 to keep our communities safe.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Ella Allen