

Submitter: Laurel Viles
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB88
Testimony SB 88 Get the Junk out of Rates - Support

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

My name is Laurel Viles, and I live in SE Portland, Oregon. I am writing because I have seen a dramatic incline in utility rates since moving to Oregon in 2020 and have recently learned what types of things we are being charged for that are entirely unfair in this economy. I support SB 88 to make sure that advertising, legal, and lobbyist fees come out of company profits, not ratepayer pockets.

Since moving to Oregon, my rates have gone up by about 70%. When I first moved to Salem in 2020, my energy bills were quite low, never more than around \$70 every month, even using a washer and dryer. When I moved to Eugene in 2021, EWEB's program seemed like a great example of how to keep publicly owned utilities up and running in the interests of the public. Now, after moving to Portland, I have seen a wildly expensive increase from a for-profit monopoly utility company; Portland General Electric. This is exactly why I support SB 88.

In November, my PGE bill was over \$170 while only turning the heat on for less than one incredibly cold week out of the month (compared to \$100 the month prior). For most folks living paycheck-to-paycheck, this is simply not something they can afford. That money would otherwise go toward groceries or paying off the debt that most Americans, unfortunately, have a mountain of. When I saw that high power bill, I immediately decided that I would rather suffer in the cold with extra blankets and not turn on my heat. This is a choice that I know I am not alone in, as others choose to reduce costs over keeping their homes warm during the cold winter months. This is the opposite of resilience, which is something we need to work toward in the midst of our changing climate.

Utility companies should not be allowed to use the money from our pockets to pay their lawyers, lobbyists, membership fees, and of ALL things, advertising. Riddle me this; why would a company that has a monopoly on all the power in one area ever need to charge their customers for advertising? They don't have any other options, so it is entirely a waste of money that we pay the price for.

I urge you to support SB 88 because we don't deserve to have to choose between buying groceries or being warm in cold months/cool in the thick of the summer heat

waves while a company like PGE makes \$313 Million in profits.

Sincerely,
Laurel Viles
Portland, Oregon