

Date: February 27 2025

To: Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Subject: Support for SB 88

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice–Chair Brock Smith, and members of the committee:

We are writing as representatives of CEP in support of SB 88: Get Junk Out of Rates. CEP serves clients on the front lines of climate change including low-income, seniors and people with disabilities. CEP offers environmental and energy education, weatherization supplies, direct home repairs, and full energy retrofits, all at no cost to our community members.

In addition, we also intervene on behalf of environmental justice communities in rate cases before the Public Utilities Commission. In the last few years CEP has intervened in PGE, NW Natural, Pacific Power and Idaho Power’s rate cases to represent the interests of low-income households and environmental justice communities and to ensure that these vulnerable populations are not disproportionately burdened by rising utility costs.

Utility companies continue to raise their rates, imposing financial strain on consumers who are already struggling to keep up with the cost of essential services. These rate hikes leave consumers shouldering not only the costs associated with the basic operation of these utilities but also the additional burden of covering corporate profits, lobbying efforts, advertising, and other non-essential expenditures. It is neither fair nor just for households, especially those in economically disadvantaged and environmentally marginalized communities, to bear the weight of costs such as lobbying, advertising, charitable donations, and industry association fees which are aimed at furthering the business interests of the utility companies. These costs do not reflect the actual cost of service that consumers should be responsible for, yet they are built into the rates that are being charged.

We also see first hand the impacts of high energy costs and how they have put Oregonians in compromising financial situations, making us less resilient to climate disasters, and more vulnerable to devastating health impacts. This is why we are in support of SB 88: Get Junk out of Rates.

We urge your support of SB 88 to ensure that advertising, legal and lobbyist fees come out of company profits, not rate payer pockets.

Greer Klepacki and Siraat Younas
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