

Submitter: Brian Ettling

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB88

Chair Sollman and members of the Committee,

My name is Brian Ettling. I live in outer NE Portland. For 25 years, I worked as a seasonal park ranger at Crater Lake National Park. Sadly, while working at this international treasure, I saw the impacts of climate change there with a diminishing average annual snowpack and more intense wildfire seasons during th summer. I became so worried about climate change that I quit the job I loved in 2017 and became a volunteer climate organizer. In recent years, I volunteer with OLCV (Oregon League of Conservation Voters), MCAT (Mobilizing for Climate Action Together), the Climate Reality Project Portland Chapter, and 350PDX. All of these organizations support SB 88, known unofficially as the "Get the Junk Out of Rates" Bill.

Because I volunteer for climate action, my wife and I are basically a one income household at this time. Thus, we are sensitive to the rising costs of utility bills which we have basically seen to almost double in recent years for our small apartment. We are not the only ones though. So many Oregonians have seen an increase in their utility bills putting them at even more financial risk and hardship than even my wife and I. Even more troubling is that high energy costs make us less resilient to climate disasters like extreme heat waves, wildfire smoke events, and arctic storms. When fear of a high energy bill forces the most vulnerable Oregonians to switch off cooling in the summer or heating in the winter, that's not resilience.

This is why I am supporting SB 88. We must bring down utility bills in the long term by increasing energy efficiency and making a clean energy transition to cheaper wind and solar. At this same time, for profit, monopoly utilities need to tighten their belts like the rest of us. Their costs such as expensive lawyers and lobbyists, advertising, industry association fees, and charitable donations should come out of company profits and not be passed along to customer ratepayers to be charged on their bills.

This is why I support SB 88 to get millions of dollars of "junk" out of our utility bills rates.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit this written testimony to express my opinion.