



March 5th, 2025

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

My name is Neil Baunsgard, and I represent The Environmental Center. We run a Home Energy Assessment program that serves underserved communities across Central Oregon to reduce the burden of high energy bills through free home energy assessments and helping navigate and support energy efficiency improvements to energy bills and subsequent bills. We see how increasing utility costs force families to make difficult choices and distrust energy utilities.

That's why we strongly support SB 88, which ensures that these regulated utilities can no longer pass unnecessary costs—like advertising, lobbying, and legal fees—onto customers. These expenses should come out of corporate profits, not the pockets of hard-working Oregonians.

Utility rates should reflect the cost of delivering reliable, affordable, and clean energy—not corporate self-promotion, lawsuits against climate protections, or industry lobbying efforts. SB 88 is a commonsense step toward fairness and accountability, ensuring that ratepayers are not footing the bill for expenses that do not directly benefit them.

More than a dozen states are pursuing similar reforms, and Colorado, Maine, and Connecticut have already taken action. It's time for Oregon to do the same. As our communities face rising costs and climate-driven energy challenges, we need our state leaders to take bold action to protect ratepayers.

I urge you to support SB 88 to provide much-needed relief to Oregonians and bring greater accountability to our regulated utilities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Neil Baunsgard  
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