



**Testimony to the Senate Rules Committee
re: SB 88**

May 5, 2025

**Ben Brint, Senior Climate Program Director
Oregon Environmental Council**

Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance equitable, innovative, and collaborative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Re: Oregon Environmental Council support for SB 88

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) and our thousands of members throughout the state, I write in strong support of SB 88. SB 88 ensures that marketing, legal, and lobbyist fees come out of company profits, not ratepayer pockets.

OEC supports SB 88 for several reasons. First, when high energy bills force Oregonians to choose between turning their heat on in the winter or paying their rent, that's not resilience. **High energy costs make us less resilient and can even turn deadly** in climate disasters like heat waves and arctic storms. It's time utility companies stop tacking unnecessary, 'junk costs' onto our already high utility bills.

Second, **it makes sense to pay for the heat or power we use** and for utilities to invest in clean energy. But we should **not be paying for** things that promote the for-profit, corporate utility's interests, like **suing Oregon to overturn our climate protection laws**.

Third, **Oregon's largest for-profit utilities have raised customers' bills by about 50% in four years**. Oregonians are left shouldering the burden of climbing fossil fuel prices, growing costs of wildfire damages, and handouts to large industrial consumers. **Higher energy bills are especially harmful to lower and middle-income Oregonians**. We must act in the short term to get utility rate hikes under control. **SB 88 will make sure that legal and lobbyist fees come out of company profits, not ratepayer pockets**.

Fourth and finally, more than a dozen states are looking at similar legislation this year. Colorado, Maine, and Connecticut have already passed laws to get the junk, like corporate lobbyist fees, out of customers' rates. **Cutting unnecessary charges from our utility bills is an easy way for state leaders to deliver relief** to working families and small businesses.

Oregon Environmental Council and our thousands of members throughout the state urge you to support SB 88.

Sincerely,

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