



OREGON LEGISLATIVE BIPOC CAUCUS

May 8, 2025

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Phạm, and Members of the House Rules Committee,

My name is Ricki Ruiz, and I have the honor of representing House District 50, which includes the vibrant communities of Gresham and parts of Outer East Portland. I come before you not only as a state legislator, but as the co-chair of the BIPOC Caucus. This year, the BIPOC Caucus is focused on building an economy that works for all Oregonians, which is why I am writing today to express the BIPOC Caucus' support for HB 3179 -8: the FAIR Energy Act.

Please note the BIPOC Caucus has grown significantly in the array of voices, ideas, and lived experiences within the caucus. As such, the policy agenda does not necessarily reflect the views or positions of any individual member, nor does it obligate individual members to support particular bills.

Oregonians are struggling to make ends meet. Last April, utility companies cut off a [record number](#) of households from electricity and/or natural gas services – 8,715 shutoffs in total – as [utility companies increase rates](#) by almost 50% since 2021. In a time when Oregonians are making the difficult decision between keeping the lights on or putting food on the table, this is unacceptable. We need to do what we can to address the energy affordability crisis.

The BIPOC Caucus stands in support of HB 3179 because it aligns with our commitment to advancing economic justice across the state. What the FAIR Energy Act does is tackle the structures that are contributing to the energy affordability crisis and in turn give families relief from their energy bills. This means prohibiting price hikes in the winter, ensuring regulators are given the full picture behind the rate increases, and providing Oregonians with more transparency about their skyrocketing utility bills.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ricki Ruiz
Co-Chair, Oregon Legislative BIPOC Caucus