

FAIR Energy Act

Fairness & Affordability in Residential Energy

HB 3179

THE PROBLEM

ENERGY BILLS ARE SKYROCKETING

Too many people are struggling to pay their energy bills. Oregon's largest for-profit utilities have raised billing rates by nearly 50% since 2021 for residential customers.

NW Natural



2025: \$1,020/year
2021: \$690/year

Portland General Electric



2025: \$1,920/year
2021: \$1,320/year

Pacific Power



2025: \$1,920/year
2021: \$1,220/year

We need to go further and fix the structures that are creating the energy affordability crisis.

While some assistance programs are available, these programs alone are not enough to keep up with the needs of utility customers. We know state and federal assistance programs are overburdened and underfunded. Oregon needs to fix the systems that make these programs necessary.

FIXING HOW OREGON SETS ENERGY UTILITY BILLING RATES



**AFFORDABLE
ENERGY BILLS**



**NO WINTER
RATE HIKES**



**SMART PUBLIC
FINANCING**

HB 3179: FAIR ENERGY ACT

The FAIR Energy Act (HB 3179) empowers state regulators to set energy billing rates at the lowest possible level, so families can better avoid big increases in energy bills. The bill also will move any increases out of winter, when energy usage is highest. Utilities will also have more flexibility to use low-cost financing for important investments in the energy grid to keep customer impacts low. Additionally, the bill will increase transparency so that customers know what they are paying for and what to expect from any changes in energy bills.

New Requirements for Utilities:

- **Prohibition on winter rate increases** from November 1 to March 31
- **Must wait 18 months after a bill increase** to add new major rate hikes
- **Inform customers what they are paying for** published by category (investments, fuel prices, etc.)
- **Publish rate changes customers can expect** over the next year, quarterly by major customer type

Empowering Regulators at the Oregon Public Utility Commission:

- **Authority to set the lowest rates possible** for customers of for-profit utilities
- **Ability to consider household economic conditions** in rates (e.g. unemployment or disconnections)
- **More options for using low-interest financing** for necessary utility infrastructure (called securitization)
- **Expanding time to consider** major rate increases to 13 months (currently 10 months)
- **Power to determine when new rates go into effect** for customers (take that out of utilities' control)

This law would apply to Oregon's For-Profit, Investor Owned Utilities:

Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, Idaho Power, NW Natural, Avista Utilities, and Cascade Natural Gas.



**Oregon Citizens'
Utility Board**



**OREGON
JUST TRANSITION
ALLIANCE**



**COMMUNITY
ENERGY PROJECT**