

FAIR Energy Act

Fairness & Affordability in Residential Energy

HB 3179

THE PROBLEM

TOO MANY PEOPLE ARE STRUGGLING TO PAY THEIR ENERGY BILLS

- Oregon's **largest utilities have raised billing rates by nearly 50%** since 2021.
- As of October 2024, **an estimated 152,500 Oregonians behind on bills were disconnected by the three largest energy utilities** -- nearly the population of Salem
- While some assistance programs are available, **current energy assistance programs alone are not enough** to keep up with the needs of utility customers

HB 3179

TALKING POINTS FOR TESTIMONY

AFFORDABLE ENERGY BILLS

- The FAIR Energy Act empowers state regulators to **set energy billing rates to the lowest level possible**
- HB 3179 **allows regulators to consider economic impacts on customers**, such as unemployment data and the number of customer disconnections for nonpayment
- This bill gives regulators more **options for using low-interest financing** for necessary utility infrastructure, saving customers money

FEWER BILL INCREASES

- The FAIR Energy Act **limits how often utilities can raise billing rates**, preventing new increases for at least 18 months after a new one is added
- HB 3179 **moves any rate increases out of winter**, banning cost hikes between November 1 to March 31 when usage is highest
- This bill also **gives regulators more power to delay increases in billing rates**, instead of allowing utilities to decide when new rates go into effect

TRANSPARENCY IN UTILITY SPENDING

- The FAIR Energy Act **helps customers understand what they are paying for** by requiring utilities to report expense categories like investments or fuel prices.
- HB 3179 **helps customers plan for upcoming bill increases** by requiring utilities to quarterly publish rate changes customers can expect in the next year



Oregon Citizens'
Utility Board



OREGON
JUST TRANSITION
ALLIANCE



COMMUNITY
ENERGY PROJECT

FAIR Energy Act

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ENERGY IS A NECESSITY WHY WE NEED ENERGY IN OUR HOMES

HAVING ENERGY POWER OUR HOMES HELPS US:

- **Keep our families fed and nourished** with a running a refrigerator, microwave, stove, and oven.
- **Keep our families' homes safe and comfortable** with healthy temperatures, healthy air, and warm water when we need it.
- **Keep perishable medicines refrigerated**, such as insulin and antibiotics
- **Keep us hooked up to life-saving devices** that ensure we can breathe— like oxygen, nebulizers, CPAP machines, and ventilators.
- **Keep us mobile** so we can charge our electric wheelchairs and use our chair lifts up and down the stairs
- **Keep us connected** so we can charge and use our mobile devices, utilize WiFi, and plug in our computers for work, education, enrichment, and entertainment.

ENERGY IS A BASIC NEED WITHOUT ENERGY SERVICES WE SUFFER

WITHOUT ACCESS TO RELIABLE AND AFFORDABLE ENERGY:

- **Our perishable food and medication go bad**, which means we not only lose money and lives are at risk, but we also lose nourishment for our families—for example, without electricity, breast milk stored in the fridge will go bad. Not all families are in a position to re-purchase a refrigerator full of groceries.
- **We can experience severe health impacts, including death**, related to exposure to cold and warm weather—especially heat, and wildfire smoke, without proper heating and cooling, and air filtration inside our homes.
- **We can die or experience significant medical distress** without the medical devices we rely on
- **We are unable to move around or even leave our homes** if we cannot safely get up and down stairs, or charge our wheelchairs.
- **We are unable to show up for virtual doctor appointments, online classes, or work.**
- **We are limited in our ability to communicate emergencies or other needs to the outside world.**

HEALTHY



SAFE



CONNECTED

