

## Oregon CUB

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### CUB Mission:

*As directed by Oregon voters in 1984, Oregon CUB represents the interests of Oregon's residential utility customers before administrative, judicial, and legislative bodies.*

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# The Bear Facts

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE  
OREGON CITIZENS' UTILITY BOARD

Fall 2021

## Your Support Made CUB's Biggest 2021 Victories Possible

### *a letter from Bob Jenks*

A CUB member recognized me recently when I was walking down the street and stopped and thanked me for the great work CUB is doing. I appreciated it, but I am the one who should be thanking CUB members.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit last summer, your support allowed CUB to pivot, requesting a moratorium on disconnections and the creation of a fund to help customers manage their bills. Many of our members contacted the Public Utility Commission (PUC) in support of our efforts. This effort has helped more than 50,000 households keep electricity.

You made it possible for CUB to help pass the most ambitious clean electricity standard in the country. Before this year's legislative session, we were told that the Legislature had no appetite for a big energy bill. Hearing from more than 300 CUB members about the need to invest in clean energy changed the picture.

Your support is essential to our efforts to fight against Portland General Electric (PGE)'s proposed rate hike. PGE is asking to raise household bills by nearly \$100 each year. CUB members like you recently appeared at a PUC public meeting to oppose PGE's request to raise the bills of residential customers while cutting them for industrial customers.

Your membership benefits Oregon households. Last year, CUB saved customers approximately \$367 for every \$1 you donated. This is money that did not flow out of state to utility stockholders, but instead stayed in Oregonians' budgets. With many families struggling, your support helps maintain affordable utilities.

Utilities will be asking for more rate hikes; that is what they do. Advocating for you and your communities is what CUB does. There is a great deal of difficult work ahead. Your support allows us to take on these challenges.

If you see me walking down the street or at the grocery store, feel free to stop and introduce yourself. But don't be surprised if I thank you.

**Last year, CUB saved customers \$367 for every \$1 you donated. This is money that did not flow out of state to utility stockholders, but instead stayed in Oregonians' budgets.**

Sincerely,



Bob Jenks  
Executive Director, Oregon CUB

## No Disconnections During the August Heatwave

During multiple days of temperatures above 100 degrees this August, your support helped prevent families from having their electricity disconnected.

We all saw the devastating effects of the record-breaking heat across Oregon earlier this summer. In times like these with high temperatures and poor air quality happening more regularly, electricity service can be a huge difference for a household's safety.

In August, CUB advocates and partner organizations called for change. Our state's largest electric utilities agreed to temporarily stop disconnections during dangerous heat advisories.

Because of this victory, families were able to keep their fans and air conditioners running, potentially saving lives. With utility disconnections starting again, it's more important than ever that we ensure everyone has electricity during extreme weather events.

This success is a milestone in changing disconnection policies. And now, thanks to your generosity, CUB advocates are working to establish permanent policies that stop Oregonians from losing electricity during future extreme weather events.



*Your support helped families stay safe with electricity during extreme heat this summer.*



*Clean electricity means a healthy and sustainable future for Oregon.*

### 100% Clean Electricity Coming to your Home

Right now, more than half of our state's electricity comes from fossil fuels. But that's about to change. Soon, your home will be fueled by emissions free electricity thanks to the 100% Clean Electricity Bill.

Your support allowed us to build the political power we needed to make clean energy a reality for Oregon. CUB advocates were able to help craft and push for this important legislation. We asked our community to speak up and you responded. Nearly 300 Oregonians like you joined the fight for clean electricity and submitted comments to their legislators.

### Oregonians Received \$27 Million in Utility Bill Relief

From the beginning of the pandemic, residential customers have used more energy at home. But with many out of work, there was no way to pay the mounting energy bills. By this spring, many households faced hundreds of dollars in unpaid energy bills.

Your support has helped secure support for families who are unable to pay their bills. With your generosity, our team was able to be in the room designing relief programs and representing your interests to regulators.

Now, nearly \$60 million in energy bill relief is available for families impacted by the pandemic. Already, more than 51,000 families across the state have received over \$27 million in energy relief.

These funds have also helped people stay connected to online schooling, telehealth, and work. Without intervention, many families were facing disconnection by the end of the summer. Thanks to you, these relief programs will help thousands of households keep their lights and heat on.

*(100% Clean Electricity Cont'd on Pg 3)*

*(100% Clean Electricity Cont'd from Pg 2)*

This victory will make communities across the state safer and healthier places to live, along with more community benefits. Many workers will receive better protections and higher wages. Community energy projects will receive more funds. And local governments will have more support to create their own climate action plans to make towns, cities, and counties more sustainable.

Your membership over the years has helped pave the way for this major change. You have supported closing coal plants in Oregon, ending out-of-state coal, and requiring utilities to use more renewable resources in their portfolios. Now, Oregonians will enjoy 100% clean electricity by 2040.



*Bob Jenks and other stakeholders stand with Governor Brown as she signs Oregon's 100% Clean Electricity bill into law*

## Help CUB Make Electric Transportation Accessible for All Oregonians

Dear CUB Member,

After big wins in the legislature this year, you can help make electric transportation more accessible.

Did you know that Oregon has nearly 37,000 electric vehicles but **only 860 public charging stations?** Not only are there not enough stations, but **public charging can be 3X more expensive than charging at home.**

Customers deserve more convenient and affordable places to charge their electric vehicles. Utilities need to develop ongoing programs for charging where people live and work.

There are few programs to help families and businesses install chargers. Utilities have tested some pilot programs, each limited to a few thousand people and only for homeowners. Renters, especially in multifamily housing, have even fewer options.

### **Oregon needs a more holistic approach to electric transportation that works for everyone.**

This fall, regulators are looking to change how utilities plan for electric vehicles. With your help, CUB advocates will be at every hearing to represent the interests of Oregon families and fight for your interests throughout the planning process.

### **Your support will help create new electric transportation plans that prioritize:**

- Renters
- Multifamily Housing
- Small Businesses
- Schools
- Public Transit
- Low-income Households

Electric vehicles are making utilities millions of dollars. These utilities must invest in meeting the needs of customers like you and make electric transportation more accessible.

**I'm asking you to donate today to help make electric transportation accessible for all.** Your donation to CUB can be the difference between more gas-powered cars and cleaner transit for everyone.

Please give \$100 now and make a difference for Oregon.

**Thank you for supporting affordable, accessible, reliable, and clean utilities.**



**Oregon CUB**

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## 2021 CUB Conference Will Facilitate Timely Policy Conversations



Your membership in 2021 allows CUB to host our 11th annual energy policy conference, *Changing Climates: Reliability and Resilience in our Energy Systems*, taking place virtually on Friday, October 15.

This conference is designed to educate energy and utility policy analysts, attorneys, advocates, regulators, and others working in and around the energy industry. We encourage interested CUB members to attend as well - you can learn more and register at [oregoncub.org/cubcon21](https://oregoncub.org/cubcon21).

CUB will convene experts from across the energy community to discuss the future of heating, outcomes and next steps from this spring's passage of Oregon's 100% Clean Electricity bill, utility system resilience and who it benefits, and lessons Oregon can learn from California and Texas in ensuring resource adequacy and reliability. CUB Executive Director Bob Jenks will also facilitate a panel with NW utility executives to discuss how their companies are grappling with the issues comprising our conference theme.

Concerns about equity in each of these areas continue to grow in both scope and immediacy. In light of that, CUB is particularly pleased to announce our **keynote speaker, Ezell Watson** - Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the Oregon Public Utility Commission.

Over the past decade, the CUB Policy Conference has become one of the region's premier policy gatherings. Your support helps make this event possible. Thank you.