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Support HB 2004 Help families in Oregon heat their homes

As a community, we all thrive when everyone has the opportunity to succeed, and success starts with a safe and healthy home. Community Action Agencies across Oregon respond to this need by efficiently providing services that improve the conditions of as many homes as possible so that our communities can thrive. One area that needs improvement in Oregon is making sure Oregonians have energy in their home. **Local Community Action Agencies answer an average of 1,500 calls each day from Oregonians in crisis seeking assistance paying their energy bill. In winter months these calls for help can reach over 8,000 per day.**

Energy assistance is one of many important services and supports that Community Action Agencies provide to help stabilize families and build healthy communities. In addition to energy assistance, agencies provide households in need with education on how to conserve energy and budget for expenses and provide weatherization services that help to ensure homes are warm, safe and secure.

The benefit of energy assistance extends far beyond help with utility bills. It helps stabilize rates by reducing costs of shut-offs. It also helps qualified, low-income Oregonians use their limited resources to pay their rent or mortgage, afford medicine and purchase food for their families. **By preventing shut-offs and restoring service, energy assistance helps Oregonians stay warm, healthy and safe in their homes.**

More than ever, Oregonians need energy assistance.

- Oregonians living in poverty can spend more than 36% of their income on home energy costs, which can force families to choose between food and heat.
- In one week of December 2012, almost 34,000 Oregonians requested energy assistance; Community Action Agencies were able to assist 5,000 of those households (about 15% of the need).
- In winter 2013, Community Action Agencies expect to have the resources to serve only one in four of the families that need support in covering their utility costs.

What HB 2004 Does

- Extends a sunset on an additional \$5 million per year for two years to help low-income families pay their energy bills.
- Creates a committee to explore a broad range of options that will ensure program administration is done in a manner that directs resources to families as efficiently as possible.

Maintaining the existing Energy Assistance charge on PGE and PacifiCorp residential bills will provide critical energy assistance to income-qualified customers in need within those same utilities' service areas.

United support for HB 2004

Community Action Partnership of Oregon (CAPO), PGE, PacifiCorp, Citizens' Utility Board have come together to support HB 2004 and help families in Oregon stay warm and in their homes.

To see what the energy assistance needs are in local communities, please review:

CAPO: Energy Snapshot - Community Action Partnership of Oregon

www.caporegon.org/.../capo.../441-energy-assistance-snapshot-2012