



Eugene Water & Electric Board

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Eugene, OR 97402
(541) 685-7000
eweb.org

March 19th, 2020

Dear Co-Chairs Roblan and Holvey, and Members of the Joint Committee on Coronavirus:

The Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) supports a significant increase in state energy assistance funds in light of the impending crisis posed by Covid-19 and the impacts it will have throughout the State of Oregon.

EWEB advocates for the allocation of at least an additional \$30 million from the Oregon legislature to supplement traditional energy assistance programs for our most vulnerable constituents. Additionally, we implore the legislature to plan for an expanded assistance package to address the deep economic impacts of unemployment and crippled revenues. This crisis calls for a new emphasis on supporting vulnerable small and locally-owned businesses (less than 50 employees) who have been impacted by, or made independent decisions in the public interest based upon, prudent recommendations of mandates of the state in the interest of public health and safety. Small businesses are the bedrock of our local communities and will need coordinated support to weather this storm.

2020 will not be a typical year. In response to the challenges ahead, EWEB has initiated a new comprehensive policy: suspending all shutoffs, suspending late fees, increasing our budget for bill assistance, expanding bill assistance to cover customers who experience job loss, and deferring loan payments for customers with residential or commercial energy efficiency loans upon request. EWEB is proud to extend such a necessary and comprehensive customer support package.

EWEB, along with other utilities and assistance organizations are stepping up to support our communities, but we cannot alone meet this imminent challenge without the financial support and partnership of the Oregon legislature.

Sincerely,

Frank Lawson
General Manager