



To:

House Energy and Environment Committee
hee.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

January 28, 2019

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Reschke, Vice-Chair Schouten, and Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee:

On behalf of the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), I'm writing to express our **support for House Bill 2242, the Public Utility Commission Reform Bill**. As a statewide, grassroots organization, we work with Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders across the state of Oregon to advance social justice.

Many of our members are low-income and working-class immigrants who face significant challenges affording their energy and utility bills. Our communities are also those most impacted by climate change and need a voice at the Public Utility Commission to be able to share how the Public Utility Commission decisions impact their families' lives.

Through leadership programs like the Climate, Health, and Housing Institute (CHHI) and last year's Community Energy Justice Summit held at Portland Community College, Southeast campus, our members are developing their understanding of our regional energy system and how it impacts their lives.

Yet significant barriers exist for our community to be able to participate in the utility regulation process. HB 2242 comes from community advocates who were involved in a Public Utility Commission process instigated by Senate Bill 978, which legislators passed during the 2017 Legislative Session. This bill will help establish resources that can further increase participation and amplify the voices of ratepayers who are underrepresented in utility regulation.

Participating in regulatory processes takes time, research, and sometimes consultation with experts in order to have an impact on policy. For community groups like APANO who are stretched thin and under-resourced, we need the resources which HB 2242 would establish, in order to further increase participation and amplify the voices of ratepayers who are currently underrepresented in utility regulation. We also look forward to the creation of a much-needed Low-Income and Environmental Justice Advocate within the Public Utility Commission who can serve as a resource to help build our capacity and expand community voices.



Ultimately, we need a bill that uplifts the voices of those most impacted and supports a targeted effort to alleviate energy burden in low-income households. As our state continues to transition into a cleaner, more sustainable economy, it is imperative that our state legislature, along with community-based organizations like APANO, are thoughtfully advocating for Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and communities of color in Oregon.

Sincerely,
Ivy Major-McDowall
Legislative Coordinator
APANO