



House Committee on Energy and Environment

February 4, 2020

**Re: HB 4067**

Chair Power, Vice-Chair Bonham, Vice-Chair Sollman, and members of the committee:

On behalf of the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), I am writing to express our strong support for House Bill 4067, which will increase equity and affordability in the Public Utility Commission's regulatory processes.

APANO is a statewide, grassroots organization that believes that every family and community should have the rights and resources they need to thrive. 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 Public Utility Commission decisions impact their families' lives.

Through leadership programs like the Climate, Health, and Housing Institute, conducting a participatory action research project on buildings and energy use, and co-hosting the Community Energy Justice Summit in 2018, our members are developing their understanding of our regional energy system and how it impacts their lives. As households struggle to afford housing, energy costs worsen the burden.

Yet significant barriers exist for our community to be able to participate in the utility regulation process. HB 4067 comes from community advocates who were involved in a Public Utility Commission process instigated by Senate Bill 978, passed in 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. Community groups like APANO who have limited capacity need the resources which HB 4067 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 liaison 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,

Jenny Lee  
Advocacy Director, APANO