

I advocate for passage of the Oregon Energy Affordability Act, HB 2475. Personal income that goes toward energy bills, is increasing as people use more energy and as sources of income decrease. Many, especially those with lower incomes, are falling behind on their bills and making tough budget decisions. They need relief. At the same time, utilities need tools to help manage mounting, past due bills. The legislature must act to allow for flexible rate structures that relieve energy burden and protect all ratepayers, long term, from widespread cost increases. With passage of HB 2475, the State Public Utility Commission will be given authority to allow utilities to provide rate designs, such as discounts, that help reduce energy burden for low income or other underserved customers. The passage will also benefit consumer groups who represent the people most impacted by energy burden, and will be able to access funding to participate in regulatory processes in the same manner as other broad customer groups like the Citizens Utility Board.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2475. Don Merrick Resident of Tigard, Oregon