

Memorandum

PREPARED FOR: Senate Committee on Rules and
Executive Appointments

DATE: May 20, 2024

BY: Leslie Porter, Legislative Analyst

RE: Legislative Review of Executive Appointments



LPRO
LEGISLATIVE POLICY
AND RESEARCH OFFICE

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

The Governor has appointed the following individual to the Public Utility Commission subject to Senate confirmation.¹ This is a full time, paid position.

Re-appointee

Letha Tawney of Portland

Term

June 1, 2024 – May 31, 2028

Appointment/Confirmation Authority

[ORS 756.014 \(2023\)](#)

Statement of Economic Interest²

Required.

Statutory Requirements³

The commission consists of three members, no more than two of whom may be of the same political party (DECKER (D), PERKINS (N/A), **TAWNEY (D)**).

Commissioners serve four-year terms and hold office until a successor has been appointed. The Governor may remove a commissioner for any cause after an opportunity for a hearing. Each commissioner must take an oath to support the United States Constitution and the Oregon Constitution. The Governor designates the chair. A majority constitutes a quorum.

No commissioner may:

- hold any other office of profit;
- hold any office or position under any political committee or party;
- hold any pecuniary interest in any business entity conducting operations that would be subject to the commission's regulatory jurisdiction; or

¹ [Or. Const. art. III sect. 4](#), [ORS 171.562 \(2023\)](#), [ORS 171.565 \(2023\)](#).

² [ORS 244.050 \(2023\)](#).

³ [ORS 756.014 \(2023\) to ORS 756.026 \(2023\)](#); [ORS 182.100 \(2023\)](#) for affirmative action policy; [ORS 236.115 \(2023\)](#) for diversity criteria.

- hold any pecuniary interest in, have any contract of employment with, or have any substantial voluntary transactions with any business or activity subject to the commission’s regulatory jurisdiction.

Duties⁴

The commission regulates rates of investor-owned electric, natural gas, and telephone utilities, and of select water companies. It also enforces electric and natural gas safety standards and handles utility-related dispute resolutions.

The commission must:

- dismiss any commission employee who fails to file pecuniary interest statements or fails to divest interests when ordered by the commission;
- represent public or telecommunications utility customers in controversies respecting rates, valuations, and service;
- make use of the jurisdiction and powers of the office to protect customers from unjust and unreasonable exactions and practices;
- establish fair and reasonable rates while balancing the interests of the utility investor and the consumer;
- keep office at the capital;
- inquire into violation of the laws and report all violations to the Attorney General;
- keep a record of all moneys deposited in the Public Utility Commission Account;
- establish, assess, and collect annual fees to be paid by regulated utilities; and
- receive, initiate, investigate, and adjudicate complaints.

⁴ [ORS 756.028 to 756.990 \(2023\)](#).



Public Utility Commission

Agency: **Energy, Oregon Department Of**

Authorization: **ORS 756.014**

Min Members: **3** Max Members: **3**

Term Length: **4** Term Limit: **None**

Senate Confirmation Required?: **Yes**

Policy Area: **Energy**

Board Admin: **Michael Grant**

Address:

201 High Street SE, Suite 100

Salem, OR 97301

503-580-4765

Michael.grant@puc.state.gov

Current Appointments

Ms Decker, Megan W

Democrat

Position Number: **1**

Term(s):

4/1/2021 - 3/31/2025

4/1/2017 - 3/31/2021

Perkins, Leslie "Les"

Unaffiliated

Position Number: **2**

Term(s):

2/16/2024 - 2/15/2028

Ms Tawney, Letha A

Democrat

Position Number: **3**

Term(s):

6/1/2024 - 5/31/2028

6/1/2020 - 5/31/2024

6/18/2018 - 5/31/2020

Vacant Positions