

Submitter: Carol Higginbotham

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Commerce and Consumer Protection

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3179

As a community college instructor I frequently interact with students who are working, studying and trying to get by. In Central Oregon this is a big challenge. These students are often burdened financially, especially with apartment rental and other expenses they have little control over, including utility payments.

As utility costs have risen in recent years, the pressure on these students has grown and these students are finding it more and more difficult to afford living here while getting an education.

For this reason I urge you to support the FAIR Energy Act, HB 3179. This bill would do several things to benefit all utility customers in the state, including my students:

Reduce the frequency of rate increases, so that those with limited incomes can better plan for and manage their utility expenses

Establish rules that keep the utility companies from raising rates in the depths of winter, when bills are highest and family finances stressed already, and

Improve the transparency to customers from Utility companies, so that the public can better understand how such rate increases will benefit them.

Thank you for your attention to this! I'm sure you are well aware of the financial pressures that exist in our region, and appreciate all efforts you make to help the people who live here have a secure and healthy home.

Carol Higginbotham

Bend