

**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
CONFIDENTIAL STAFF REPORT
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: September 26, 2017**

REGULAR X CONSENT _____ EFFECTIVE DATE October 5, 2017

DATE: September 12, 2017

TO: Public Utility Commission

FROM: Rose Anderson ^{RA}
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THROUGH: Jason Eisdorfer and Marc Hellman

SUBJECT: PORTLAND GENERAL ELECTRIC: (Docket No. ADV 623/
Advice No. 17-16) Requests removal of expiration date for low income bill
payment assistance in Schedule 115.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (Commission) approve Portland General Electric's (PGE or Company) request to remove the expiration date from its Schedule 115 for Low-Income Assistance effective with service on and after October 5, 2017.

DISCUSSION:

Issue

Whether the Commission should approve PGE's request to remove the expiration date from its Schedule 115 for Low-Income Assistance.

Applicable Rule or Law

Under ORS 757.205(1), a public utility must file schedules showing all rates, tolls and charges for service that have been established and are in force at the time. Tariff revisions or corrections may be made by filing revised sheets with the information required under the Commission's administrative rules, including OAR 860-022-0005 and OAR 860-022-0025. Filings that make any change in rates, tolls, charges, rules or regulations must be filed with the Commission at least 30 days before the effective date of the changes. ORS 757.220. The Commission reviews tariffs filed under ORS 757.205 and 757.210 to determine whether they are fair, just and reasonable.

Analysis

Background

ORS 757.612(7)(b) authorizes PGE and PacifiCorp to collect \$15 million from ratepayers for low-income electric bill payment assistance. In 2011, the Oregon Legislature authorized the utilities to collect five million dollars in supplemental funding for a period of two years.¹ The Oregon Legislature has twice extended the repeal date for the five million dollars in supplemental funding. Authority to collect supplemental funding for low-income bill assistance has been extended to January 2, 2018.² However, PGE's current Schedule 115 currently has an October 4, 2017 expiration date for the supplemental charge.

The Company's requested change to Schedule 115

Staff reviewed the Company's filing, the Company's current Schedule 115 Tariff, and the House Bills referenced by the Company in its filing.

Staff finds that removing the expiration date from the collection of Schedule 115 rates is consistent with the combined effects of HB 3257 (2015 regular session) and HB 2134 (2017).

- HB 3257 (2015 regular session) extended the collection of \$5 million in supplemental low-income funds until January 2, 2018.
- Beginning January 2, 2018, HB 2134 (2017) combines the original \$15 million and the supplemental \$5 million in low-income assistance funding into a single \$20 million amount.

These changes result in a consistent collection of \$20 million in low-income funding from Oregon utilities. The expiration date in the Company's current tariff would reduce PGE's collection of low-income assistance funding after October 4, 2017. This decrease in funding would be counter to the language of the Oregon laws mentioned above.

The requested removal of the expiration date for \$5 million in low-income assistance funding will not result in a rate impact to customers.

Conclusion

The Company's request to amend its Schedule 115 language will update the

¹ 2011 Or Laws Ch. 566(3).

² 2013 Or Laws Ch. 254(2), 2015 Or Laws Ch. 187(1).

Company's Tariff to comply with Oregon law and will not cause harm to ratepayers.

The Company has reviewed a draft of this memo and did not express any concerns.

PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:

Approve the Company's application to remove the expiration date from its Schedule 115 for rates effective with service on and after October 5, 2017.