

1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
2 OF THE STATE OF OREGON

3
4 Docket No. UE 433, UE 434

5
6 In the Matter of:

7 PACIFICORP'S PROPOSED

Public Comment

8 RATE INCREASE
9

10
11 The Public Utility Commission of Oregon held a Public
12 Comment Hearing for PacifiCorp's proposed rate increase.
13 The transcript is as follows:

14 DATE: April 30, 2024

15 TIME: 6:00 p.m.

16 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Christopher Allwein

17 The purpose of the conference is to hear public comments on
18 the rate increase proposed by PacifiCorp, doing business as
19 Pacific Power in Docket No. UE 433, Request for a General
20 Rate Revision and UE 434 regarding PacifiCorp's 2025 power
21 cost forecast.

22 Transcription Service:

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23 Proceedings recorded by electronic sound recording; transcript
24 produced by transcription service.
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1 ALJ ALLWEIN: Good evening, everyone. Welcome to
2 this Public Comment Hearing for PacifiCorp's proposed rate
3 increase. We're going to begin the public comment hearing in
4 a moment.

5 This evening, we have Spanish translation services
6 available through the Zoom platform, which will enable you to
7 hear this proceeding translated into Spanish and to have any
8 comments provided in Spanish translated into English.

9 I will now turn it over to the Interpreters to
10 introduce themselves in Spanish and English and provide
11 instructions for accessing the Spanish translation channel.

12 INTERPRETER: Thank you very much. Good evening,
13 this is Victor, one of your Spanish Interpreters, and I will
14 be giving the instructions both in English and Spanish. I'll
15 start with Spanish first. [pause for Spanish instruction]

16 Good evening everyone. We have interpretation
17 available, as mentioned. In a moment, interpretation button
18 will be enabled and so, you will be able to see the globe icon
19 at the bottom of your screen if you're joining us through a
20 computer.

21 If you're joining us through a mobile device such as
22 a tablet or smart phone, there will be three dots at the
23 bottom right hand side of your screen with the words "more."
24 From there, there will be a new menu. In that menu, you will
25 select language interpretation.

1 If your language preference is English, please
2 select English. Or if your language of preference is Spanish,
3 select Spanish. At any moment, you can switch back and forth
4 between these two channels but it's very important that you
5 must select one of these channels, just to make sure that all
6 the information shared today can be understood. Thank you.
7 And to Jorge now.

8 INTERPRETER: My name is Jorge Fuenmayor and I'm
9 going to be one of your Spanish interpreters today. Thank
10 you.

11 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right, thank you both. Please
12 turn on the interpretation feature. All right. Everyone
13 please select either the English or Spanish channel after
14 clicking the interpretation button at the bottom of your
15 screen. If you click the Spanish option, you will hear a
16 Spanish translation of everything this evening and will be
17 able to have your comments translated from Spanish to English.

18 And whether you prefer Spanish or not, you must
19 choose a channel. I repeat, you must choose either the
20 English or Spanish channel in order to participate in and
21 properly hear the entirety of the proceeding this evening. I
22 will give everyone a moment to choose the language channel.
23 [pause]

24 All right. Thanks all. It is just after 6:00 PM on
25 April 30, 2024, here in Salem, Oregon. I am Christopher

1 Allwein, an Administrative Law Judge assigned to these
2 proceedings. We are here tonight to hear your comments on the
3 rate increase proposed by PacifiCorp, doing business as
4 Pacific Power in Docket No. UE 433, Request for a General Rate
5 Revision and UE 434 regarding PacifiCorp's 2025 power cost
6 forecast.

7 We are recording tonight's session so that we have a
8 record of your comments for consideration by PUC staff and the
9 Commissioners. And speaking of the Commissioners, all are
10 present tonight, and we'd like to get started with a few words
11 from the Chair of the Commission, Megan Decker. Chair Decker?

12 CHAIR DECKER: Good evening, and I'd like to welcome
13 my fellow Commissioners, Commissioner Letha Tawney and
14 Commissioner Les Perkins on up to say hello. I want to let
15 everyone know how much we appreciate the time that you take
16 tonight to give us your perspective on Pacific Power's rate
17 increase request.

18 Your comments both give us in touch with the people
19 that utilities are serving and for whom we are actively
20 scrutinizing these rate increase requests. And they also give
21 us a sense of your priorities and the things that we should be
22 asking the Utility tough questions about.

23 So, our team will explain in further detail how your
24 comments are entered into the record that we have for decision
25 in this case, but I wanted to express our appreciation for

1 your time and your thoughtful comments about how we can
2 balance the considerations of affordable service, reliable
3 service and safe service of electricity to Oregonians.

4 Commissioners, would you like to say hello and add
5 any words of welcome? Commissioner Tawney.

6 COMMISSIONER TAWNEY: Thanks so much, Chair Decker.
7 Just want to echo your thanks to folks taking time out of
8 their evenings to share their thoughts with us. I know you've
9 probably got other things you'd rather be doing, but we're
10 excited to be here and hear what you have to say.

11 COMMISSIONER PERKINS: Thank you, Chair Decker.
12 Just, yes, thank you, everybody, for taking time out of your
13 day. Appreciate you spending time with us and giving us your
14 thoughts.

15 CHAIR DECKER: Great. We'll turn it back over to
16 Judge Allwein and go off camera until the proceedings begin
17 with your comments. Thanks.

18 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Thank you, Commissioners.
19 Before we turn to comments from the public, I will provide a
20 brief overview of the process in these proceedings. And then,
21 a PUCO staffer will provide a brief presentation on
22 PacifiCorp's request for a general rate increase and 2025
23 power cost forecast and staff's role in these proceedings.

24 And so, let's go ahead and put the AHD slide show
25 up, please. All right, thank you. This Public Comment

1 Hearing is before the Oregon Public Utility Commission, which
2 serves as the regulatory body overseeing utility service in
3 the State, including rates and rate changes, such as that
4 requested by PacifiCorp here in these proceedings.

5 Today's Public Comment Hearing, as you can see from
6 the slide here, is one step of many in these proceedings. And
7 after today's hearing, we will prepare a transcript of all
8 comments received, and Commission staff will file them with
9 their opening testimony, along with any other comments
10 received.

11 All comments will be considered by the Commission
12 along with other evidence provided by PacifiCorp, Commission
13 staff, and other interveners in deciding whether and to what
14 extent to grant PacifiCorp' request.

15 In making its decision, the Commission will balance
16 the interests of utility customers and the Utility itself.
17 The Commission could decide to grant the request in full or
18 grant the request with changes or deny the request.

19 In addition to today's Public Comment Hearing, if
20 you look at the slide, you see we have a few steps to go, and
21 I would highlight a couple here. The Commission has an
22 evidentiary hearing scheduled for September 26th, which is
23 Step 7 there on the third column on the right. And the
24 Commission will hear oral arguments from parties on October
25 31st. The Commission anticipates issuing a final order in

1 this docket by December 19th, and any new rates would become
2 effective on January 1, 2025.

3 Additionally—and let's go to the next slide. Sorry
4 about that.

5 Additionally, any members of the public who wish to
6 comment but cannot do so this evening may submit written
7 comments via our website, by email or US mail, or by calling
8 Consumer Services as shown on this slide and all of this
9 information is also on our website. Public comment is also
10 accepted via telephone by calling consumer services on the
11 toll-free number as listed on the slide.

12 And again, I know the slide's only up here for a
13 little bit, but you can find this information at our website.
14 Members of the public may request an interpreter at the time
15 they call and will be connected to an interpreter to the
16 extent that one is available for their language.

17 PUC Consumer Services representatives will provide a
18 summary of all comments received to staff, and staff will
19 provide an overview of any and all comments received by June
20 14, 2024 as a part of its opening testimony.

21 And with that, I will now turn things over to
22 Melissa Nottingham with Commission staff for a brief
23 presentation. Good evening, Melissa.

24 MELISSA NOTTINGHAM: Good evening, thank you, Judge
25 Allwein. Can we go ahead and put the presentation up for us

1 now? Thank you. My name is Melissa Nottingham and I'm the
2 Manager of Consumer Services at the Public Utility Commission.
3 Part of my role is to gather public comments. Tonight, I will
4 be providing a high-level overview of PacifiCorp's general
5 rate case and net power cost filing.

6 Please note the information provided is the
7 company's proposal and does not reflect the final decision.
8 As part of the process, staff will be reviewing the company's
9 request to ensure it is reasonable and necessary for providing
10 reliable electric service to PacifiCorp Oregon customers.

11 Next slide. Currently, PacifiCorp has two open
12 dockets impacting 2025 rates. First, is the general rate
13 case, UE 433. General rate cases impact base rates and
14 include operation and maintenance costs, new investment,
15 upgrading existing facilities. This is the third rate case
16 that PacifiCorp has filed since 2019.

17 The second is the transition adjustment mechanism or
18 UE 434. This is an annual filing for net power costs. Net
19 power costs are basically the cost for electricity. It
20 includes the price of fuel like natural gas to generate
21 electricity, the cost of wholesale power purchases, and is
22 less any income the company receives from selling electricity
23 on the wholesale market.

24 These are a pass-through, meaning that a company is
25 not allowed to collect more than the actual costs. Unlike a

1 general rate case, it is an annual filing to recover costs or
2 pass savings to customers in a timely manner.

3 Next slide, please. First, let's discuss the
4 general rate case. The company is asking for \$322.3 million
5 or an increase of 17.9% over existing rates. The increase,
6 the rates would go into effect January 1st, 2025, and the
7 impact will vary across customer classes.

8 This table demonstrates the impact on residential
9 rates. Residential includes both single family and
10 multifamily homes. Using an average kilowatt hour for each
11 type of service, the approximate increase is 22%. It's
12 important to note the increase will vary depending on how much
13 power or kilowatt hours a customer use. This table excludes
14 the impact of the TAM.

15 Next slide, please. These tables provide a little
16 more detail on the rate change. The basic charge for a
17 single-family home would increase from \$11 to \$16 a month.
18 The basic charge for a multifamily would increase from \$8 to
19 \$9 a month.

20 PacifiCorp offers an income-eligible rate schedule
21 with a discount for customers based on their reported income.
22 Two levels are offered. Households with income 21 to 60
23 percent of state medium income receive a 20 percent discount.
24 Households with incomes 20 percent or less of state medium
25 income receive a 40 percent discount. With these discounts

1 the basic charge would be reduced and the kilowatt hour
2 charge, but the basic charge would be \$14.60 and \$11.68
3 respectively. The overall average increase though remains at
4 approximately 22 percent.

5 Next slide, please. Considering both the general
6 rate case and the power cost adjustment, what is the overall
7 impact to residential customers in January 2025? The current
8 forecast for net power costs is an \$18 million reduction in
9 what is currently in rates. If we take this number in
10 consideration with the filed rate case, it is forecasted to
11 reduce the overall impact of the general rate case by
12 approximately 1% or average of 21%.

13 It's important to note also the TAM is a forecast or
14 the net power costs are used interchangeably and will be re-
15 evaluated in November based on updated costs. So, these
16 present numbers are not final.

17 Next slide, please. So, what are driving these
18 increases for the rate case? The largest bucket at 34% is
19 capital projects or new investments. These include new
20 transmission, increasing wind generation, a new billing system
21 for consumers.

22 The second largest at 24.1% of the overall ask is a
23 catastrophic fire fund. This amount would represent Oregon's
24 contribution to a multi-state risk fund to cover claims for
25 catastrophic events in excess of the company's insurance

1 coverage.

2 The third bucket is at 20.5% is an insurance
3 mechanism. This insurance mechanism would help to recover the
4 increasing costs for purchasing liability insurance in high-
5 risk areas.

6 Next slide, please. To review PacifiCorp's
7 proposal, the Public Utility Commission employs experts of a
8 variety of areas. Rate cases are complex. The company must
9 demonstrate the spending is necessary, prudent, and
10 reasonable. Staff's responsibility encompasses a range of
11 tasks from technical analysis, economic review, risk analysis,
12 and how these costs are then distributed among the different
13 types of customers.

14 To do this analysis, a team of accountants,
15 financial analysts, economists, engineers are employed to make
16 sure the projects, the forecasts, the models used by the
17 company are reasonable and sound. We also provided legal
18 guidance by the Department of Justice.

19 Next slide. Rate cases are quasi-judicial
20 proceeding and follow a very court-like schedule and
21 procedures. Staff will be filing its opening testimony on
22 June 28th. We've already begun asking—the process of asking
23 the company for additional information to support their rate
24 case. And I strongly encourage everyone to follow the docket
25 by going to eDockets at our web page www.Oregon.gov/PUC and

1 follow UE433 and UE434 to stay in the loop on any updates.

2 Next slide. I want to thank everyone for attending
3 and I look forward to hearing your feedback tonight. If you
4 have any other questions or issues, please contact us at
5 Consumer Services. Our number is on the screen but is 1-800-
6 522-2404. Thank you.

7 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Thank you, Melissa, very
8 much. We are now going to hear public comments on
9 PacifiCorp's request. Let me go over the process we will be
10 following tonight to help ensure that everyone has a chance to
11 speak and be heard.

12 Just a reminder, please make sure that you have
13 selected either the English or Spanish channel after clicking
14 the interpretation button at the bottom of the screen. You
15 must choose a channel, either English or Spanish, in order to
16 participate in and properly hear the entirety of the
17 proceeding this evening. If you click the Spanish option, you
18 will hear a Spanish translation of everything said this
19 evening and will be able to have your comments translated from
20 Spanish to English.

21 Second, in order to stay organized, we'll be using
22 the raise your hand function of Zoom. For participants using
23 PC, personal computer, you can find the raise your hand
24 function at the bottom of your screen. For those of you that
25 are joining us by telephone, you can raise your hand by

1 pressing star 9. I will call on individuals by name or the
2 last digits of your phone number when it is your turn to
3 speak, and we'll unmute you at that time. You may also need
4 to unmute your computer microphone or telephone, and you can
5 unmute yourself on the phone by using star 6.

6 I ask that everyone stay muted until called upon,
7 and that will minimize the background noise while others are
8 speaking. The Commissioners are present and will be listening
9 carefully this evening but will not be answering questions or
10 responding to individual comments tonight.

11 At this time, I just want to ask anyone wishing to
12 provide comments, if you would raise your hand by using the
13 feature or by pressing star nine so that we can get an idea of
14 how many people are going to make comments this evening. All
15 right, it looks like we have quite a few commenters.

16 All right, just a couple more items here. When
17 called to speak, speak clearly and state your name for the
18 record. Your comments are being recorded and we want to
19 ensure that they can be clearly heard for the record and
20 translated into Spanish for those listening on the Spanish
21 channel.

22 When you're speaking, please provide a brief summary
23 of your views so we can hear from as many of you as possible.
24 Please avoid repeating statements already made by others.
25 Instead, state your support for what others have said.

1 If you have prepared written comments, and I
2 encourage you to do so, you would just summarize those
3 comments and then you can submit those comments in writing in
4 one of the ways we've just discussed. And with that, we'll
5 get started. Again, if you would like to provide comments,
6 please use the raise your hand function if you've not already
7 done so. If you're calling this evening, press star 9 to
8 raise your hand. I will call on folks in the order that they
9 appear on the screen.

10 All right. And with that, let's start with Eldo
11 Varghese. Forgive me if I'm not saying your name correctly.
12 Eldo Varghese, please go ahead and give your comments. And
13 thank you for joining us tonight.

14 ELDO VARGHESE: Hi. Thank you. I hope you can hear
15 me okay. My name is Eldo Varghese. I'm a citizen residing in
16 northeast Portland and also a customer of Pacific Power.
17 Tonight I'm speaking against the Pacific Power rate increase
18 request.

19 While Oregon residents are dealing with high cost of
20 living increases, including overall high energy costs, these
21 IOUs, including Pacific Power or PacifiCorp, are making large
22 profits while I and other Oregon residents have been wanting
23 to reduce our general pollution, as well as carbon footprint
24 associated with our electricity consumption, Pacific Power has
25 been falling down in the face of much-needed fast transition

1 to clean, renewable power.

2 I'd like to remind that Pacific Power still has
3 about close to 50% coal usage, compared to other Pacific
4 Northwest IOUs that have much higher renewable intensity
5 compared to them. Instead of innovating with plants of NWA
6 and DERs and other on-peak demand handling, we are instead
7 asked to pay the company for methane power—methane peaker
8 plants, also called natural gas peaker plants, and other
9 absurd fossil fuel costs. While the rest of the West Coast
10 sees reduced LCOE for new renewables and associated lower
11 energy costs, we are instead asked to pay Pacific Power for
12 business as usual.

13 I ask today that PUC decline this request and bring
14 Pacific Power into the 21st century. Thank you.

15 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Thank you very much for
16 your comments. We appreciate them. And we're going to go to
17 Linda Nolte. And following Linda Nolte will be Doug Parsons
18 and Alessandra De La Torre. But for now, we'll start with
19 Linda Nolte. Please state your name for the record and let us
20 hear your comments. Thank you. [pause] Linda, you may have
21 to unmute yourself. [pause]

22 LINDA NOLTE: There it is. I've got it. Thank you
23 very much for your patience.

24 ALJ ALLWEIN: Sure, no problem. Thank you for
25 joining us. Thank you.

1 LINDA NOLTE: I haven't done this much and my
2 comments aren't nearly as sophisticated as the other, the
3 first person, but I'm so impressed with what he had to say and
4 I agree with 90% of it. So, my comments are more, maybe a
5 little more values-based and quality of life-based.

6 First of all, I was looking at the article that said
7 in the paper that the average home is only using 950 kilowatts
8 a month of electricity and will only have an increase of \$30.
9 I believe that's absolutely unrealistic. I went to an online
10 calculator a few minutes ago and found out that most homes are
11 of that rate would be about a 1,000 to 1,200 hundred square
12 feet. That's almost a tiny home. I think we—I would love to
13 see some statistics where you did a curve showing the size of
14 the homes, their electric wattage usage average per month and
15 cost. Because I believe that this grossly understates what
16 people are spending on electricity and what the usage would
17 be. So, that's my first point.

18 The second point, when I look at the percent of
19 increase for residential users and small commercial, it's 21.6
20 and 22.4. These small users and residential are
21 significantly less able to pay extremely high, and I apologize
22 for the word, almost obscene amounts for their electricity.

23 While I agree with trying to be as green as we can,
24 I do believe there are some practicalities around converting
25 fossil fuels, coal and gas, to electricity. By the time we

1 could use those fuels directly in the short term, cheaper than
2 taking one form of fuel and converting it to another form of
3 fuel.

4 One of my sources for that is a newspaper, the *Epoch*
5 *Times*, which you may be familiar with, that also talks about
6 my third point, how big tech is consuming a disproportionate
7 amount of electricity, not only to produce what they do but—
8 and water's not on the table but—and they're getting lots of
9 incentives and rates and subsidies that the small wage earner
10 just can't afford, can't come up with.

11 And so, I think it's a disparate impact on the
12 average citizen of Oregon. Anecdotally, people that I know
13 from out of state, this is very anecdotal, don't want to move
14 here because of our costs and the reputation of the cost of
15 energy. And overall, if our population doesn't grow, we know
16 the impact that's going to have on our state. And so, the
17 average earner with the smallest house is going to be forced
18 out.

19 So, I would—I am against it. I should have said
20 that up front to net it out. Very much against it. I think
21 we've only scratched the surface of the research on this. And
22 I would like to take a look at, as our first speaker said,
23 what are ways that we can manage consumption with peaks and so
24 forth without punishing the little guy, the average wage
25 earner, the people who are making \$17, \$20 an hour. And I ask

1 you to seriously consider that and the human impact. Thank
2 you for listening and thank you for being on a commission. I
3 know it can be a thankless job and you get shot at a lot. And
4 thank you for being willing to hear all of this.

5 ALJ ALLWEIN: Well, thank you very much for your
6 comments. And I do encourage you, as Melissa said earlier, to
7 follow the case as the request is scrutinized by our staff and
8 other interveners. And with that, we'll go to Douglas
9 Parsons, and he will be followed by Alessandra De La Torre,
10 and then Carmen D. But we'll go to Douglas Parsons now.
11 Please step up and say your name for the record and let us
12 hear your comments. Thank you.

13 DOUGLAS PARSONS: Thank you. Hi, I'm Douglas
14 Parsons. I retired to Roseburg, Oregon from Houston, Texas,
15 where I worked in the energy industry, including the power
16 side. Before we look at additional rate increases, I think we
17 need to look at how has PacifiCorp spent the money so far.
18 They've spent money on a wildfire prevention system upgrade
19 that I think you all are well aware is not working. It's not
20 reliable.

21 In a letter that I received from you all, explained
22 that they really have no idea, the power company that is,
23 really have no idea in many cases as to what's caused the
24 circuits to be open. Possibly a bird taking off flight. If
25 their idea of stopping wildfires is to turn off the power

1 early in the morning when the temperatures are low and the
2 winds are low, and then leave it off all day long, that's not
3 providing reliable power to us.

4 Secondly, they've spent money on a public relations
5 survey, and I told them in the survey, I need reliable power,
6 not improved public relations.

7 They're asking for, in essence, over a 50% increase
8 in the past three years or over a three-year period. And
9 that's for them. For us, we have lower reliability and a
10 greater risk of out-of-pocket repair and replacement costs due
11 to the variable power quality.

12 People are already afraid. They're not keeping up
13 with rising prices. You know, this is specifically asking for
14 money.

15 This latest one is asking for money for wildfire
16 mitigation. My point is they've got a system that doesn't
17 work. I don't know if they chose the wrong technology or the
18 wrong contractor, but that system needs to be fixed.

19 Secondly, a wildfire mitigation liability fund, I'm
20 not a shareholder. That's for the shareholders to deal with.
21 And as far as renewal—and besides the liability, once the
22 monies are there, how do we know where it's going to be spent?
23 Is it going to go to other large corporations or the
24 government maybe?

25 So, in closing, I recognize that climate change is

1 going to make us poor. But let's spend our money wisely.

2 Thank you.

3 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Thank you very much for
4 your comments. We appreciate them. And we'll now go to
5 Alessandra De La Torre. And Alessandra will be followed by
6 Carmen D. and Richard Pierce. Alessandra De La Torre, please
7 go ahead and state your name for the record and provide your
8 comments. Thank you.

9 ALESSANDRA DELATORRE: Yeah, thank you. Good
10 evening, Chair Decker and Commissioners Tawney and Perkins. I
11 am actually here with two other community members to help with
12 accessibility. And so, I won't be providing comments today,
13 but I want the record to show that Blanca Gutierrez and Carmen
14 Peña will be providing comments, Blanca in English and Carmen
15 in Spanish, back to back if that's okay. Perfect.

16 ALJ ALLWEIN: That's fine. You said Carmen, and
17 then who was the second one?

18 ALESSANDRA DELATORRE: Blanca Gutierrez, and she's
19 ready to speak.

20 ALJ ALLWEIN: Oh, okay. Go ahead. Yes, please. Go
21 ahead. Thank you. Sorry.

22 BLANCA GUTIERREZ: Good evening, Chair Decker and
23 Commissioners Tawney and Perkins. Thank you for the
24 opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Blanca
25 Gutierrez, Leadership Development and Cultural Director at

1 Rogue Climate, a climate justice organization with offices in
2 Phoenix and Coos Bay, Oregon, both in Pacific Power territory.
3 Many of the community members we work with are also Pacific
4 Power customers.

5 We at Rogue Climate oppose Pacific Power's rate
6 increase proposal and encourage the PUC to do the same. This
7 rate increase puts thousands of Oregonians at risk, many who
8 are already choosing between different life essentials, such
9 as keeping their power on or paying medical bills.

10 We urge the PUC to deny rate increases to cover the
11 catastrophic fire fund and the corporate liability insurance.
12 Our communities consist of many families and individuals who
13 lost their homes or were affected in the 2020 Almeida fire.
14 It's been almost four years since then and people are still
15 recovering.

16 Customers already pay the company to build in safety
17 measures. They should not be charged to pay for the company's
18 recklessness, neither now nor in the future. Pacific Power's
19 proposal to convert power plants to methane gas is not an
20 investment in renewable energy. It is a lateral move to a
21 different kind of fossil fuel.

22 Pacific Power is not taking responsibility for their
23 climate impacts and is instead attempting to avoid
24 responsibility for wildfires by claiming that they are a
25 climate inevitability.

1 Pacific Power's request will also increase profit
2 margins for wealthy shareholders and one of the richest men in
3 the world, Warren Buffett, owns PacifiCorp, all this at the
4 expense of vulnerable and already energy burdened customers.

5 If all the proposed items are approved, that would
6 mean customers could be paying 63% more for electricity in
7 2025 than they did in 2022. I'd like to put some percentages
8 into perspective to show the impact that this rate increase
9 would have on families in Oregon.

10 According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the
11 average weekly wages for the State of Oregon rose only 0.5%
12 between September 2022 and September 2023. That translates to
13 \$28 on average per month.

14 At the beginning of this year, Pacific Power
15 increased their rates by 12.9%, which means that on average,
16 customers saw an increase of \$15 monthly. That's already over
17 half of the average increase in wages. It's unreasonable to
18 expect the average customer to keep up with an even greater
19 rate increase for an essential service, especially to pay for
20 the company's wildfire liabilities.

21 This is why we ask the Commission to reject the rate
22 increase and instead limit rate increases to 7% plus inflation
23 or to 10%, whichever is lowest. This cap would apply to the
24 cumulative increase customers see over the course of the year.

25 Thank you so much for your time.

1 ALJ ALLWEIN: Okay, thank you very much. And if the
2 next commenter here is going to provide comments in Spanish,
3 you probably want to switch to the Spanish language channel.
4 And that way those comments will be interpreted in English and
5 folks on the Spanish channel will be able to hear them. Thank
6 you.

7 BLANCA GUTIERREZ: That's great, thank you. Okay.

8 CARMEN PENA: [Spanish]

9 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Thanks to the three of
10 you for participating tonight and providing that compelling,
11 those compelling comments. Thank you. Let's go to Carmen D.
12 And then Carmen D. will be followed by Richard Pierce and
13 Cindy Flowers. But we'll start with Carmen D. Go ahead with
14 your comments. Thank you.

15 CARMEN DUNNINGTON: Thank you, Judge. My name is
16 Carmen Dunnington. I'm in Seaside. I'm kind of mirroring
17 everything that everybody else just said, so I'm just gonna
18 say I agree. Thank you everyone for giving us the opportunity
19 to have a voice here.

20 I just got off of several months of unemployment
21 where I figured out I was making \$11.45 an hour. It put me in
22 a little bit of debt. I got a job paying \$1.50 less than I
23 was making before, with no overtime or about an hour's
24 overtime. Like a lot of people, I live in fear that my rent's
25 going to be raised because landlords can raise our rent 10%

1 now, better than the 14 that they could do before. Our
2 minimum wage is going to go up. I'm in, what's the standard
3 rate? 3.4%, \$0.50. I'm not going to see a raise. We're not
4 getting raises where I work.

5 So, we're talking less than 3.4% in wages, over 20%
6 in electricity. Most everybody that I know is using the low
7 income internet. They're going to lose that. That is going
8 to go from \$0 to \$30 that people are paying, up to \$70 to \$100
9 in my area. \$70 is the base. That's not really good service.

10 I can afford it if I don't go out to eat, don't go
11 to movies. Maybe don't buy some new clothes, you know, just
12 live with what I have. But I have many coworkers and friends
13 who cannot afford it, people with children, people who are
14 paying a lot more rent than I do. A doctor owns the house
15 where I live and he doesn't need the money so he keeps our
16 rent low. What if he sells it?

17 It's just too much. Twenty percent, I can't imagine
18 what I would do with 20—well I can't imagine what I would do
19 with 20% more pay. And as the last speaker said, a lot of it
20 is because of their civic powers and PGEs in action on taking
21 care of the lines that they had in high risk areas. So, thank
22 you again.

23 ALJ ALLWEIN: Thank you very much for your comments.
24 We appreciate those. And it's a good perspective for us to
25 remember. Let's go to Richard Pierce. And Richard Pierce

1 will be followed by Cindy Flowers and Jennifer Sawyer.

2 Richard Pierce, go ahead and state your name and provide us
3 your comments. Thank you.

4 RICHARD PIERCE: Good evening Commissioners. My
5 name is Richard Pierce. I live in Bend, Oregon. In the last
6 five years I moved from Portland. I've been a resident of
7 Oregon for over 50 years. I'm a business guy so I'm opposed
8 to the rate, the size of the rate increase on a couple of
9 standards.

10 One is Warren Buffett didn't buy PacifiCorp from
11 Scottish Power with the idea of just running it. He has a
12 good reputation for making lots of money for his investors.
13 That's good for him. But it's—I think the people you have,
14 professionals you have that are economists and technical folks
15 need to look back to Scottish Power when they owned it, and
16 now it's owned by—completely owned by a subsidiary of Warren
17 Buffett's.

18 And I would look to that history in terms of what
19 investments they could have, should have made to prevent the
20 fire issues that are happening now. It seems very easy that—
21 to put those kinds of demands on current residential users and
22 not look at the equity side and responsibility for the
23 previous equity owners of the utility.

24 Secondly, the issue I have is, you know, they're
25 asking for a rate increase that's roughly five to six times

1 the current level of inflation that people are experiencing
2 already. You've heard in previous comments how that's
3 affecting people. I think my Social Security went up by 3-
4 point something percent.

5 So, you know, it's a question of having your
6 professional people delve into and cut their rate increase
7 into sections. I'm particularly interested in how much
8 commercial enterprises are paying because I have a son that
9 works for Meta, old Facebook, and they have a large call
10 center in Prineville and there are basically, those call
11 centers are developing with artificial intelligence at a very
12 high rate.

13 So, I would like to see the division of private
14 costs to private homes as opposed to commercial, but what
15 revenue they get from commercial side of the business. I also
16 understand they're trying to run another transmission line
17 down the east side of the Cascades. They're not doing that
18 for no profit.

19 So, I hope that the people that report to you can
20 look not only at the future, they're looking at 2025, but to
21 look back to when Scottish Power owned it a few years back and
22 see what could or should have been done. I think that'll go a
23 long way to mitigating some of their requests that are this
24 size.

25 General inflation, I get it. They've got to give

1 their employees, you know, a raise. But I think to take it
2 out completely on ratepayers and especially residential
3 ratepayers, not a fair deal. That was pretty much it. I
4 would love to say Spanish, but my Spanish teacher was el
5 ultimo en el primero en salir. So that was last to come,
6 first to go. So, not in Spanish. Thank you for your time.

7 ALJ ALLWEIN: We do have a Spanish interpreter, so
8 you do not have to put yourself out and do that tonight. But
9 we do appreciate your comments very much. Thank you. Let's
10 go to Cindy Flowers, followed by Jennifer Sawyer and Chelsea.
11 Cindy Flowers, go ahead and state your name for the record,
12 and let us hear your comments. Thank you.

13 CINDY FLOWERS: For the record, I have my rate here
14 for my apartment. I'm in a HUD apartment and I got my bill
15 for last month and I used 888 kilowatts, and the price is
16 \$109.87. I have a 500 square foot apartment. I don't
17 understand. They don't have anything for people that are
18 seniors in their—they have family homes and commercial, but
19 they don't have anything for seniors or people that are
20 retired, that are living by themselves. I think that—I just
21 feel that there's a lot of seniors that are homeless because
22 they can't pay their bills.

23 And a lot of people don't—and there isn't a lot of
24 resources out there now for anyone like me. There used to be
25 during the pandemic, I had plenty of resources. But I'm

1 getting—I just feel that this pay raise, it's not taking, it
2 really affects seniors. And a lot of seniors are the ones
3 that are homeless because they can't pay their bills. And I
4 think this is part of the reason why. Thank you.

5 ALJ ALLWEIN: Thank you for your comments. And Ms.
6 Flowers, I would encourage you to call our Consumer Services
7 Division. There may be some options, just depending on your
8 economic status. So, I would encourage you to do that.

9 Jennifer Sawyer, we'd like to hear your comments,
10 and then we'll go to Chelsea and Sylvia Tanner. Jennifer
11 Sawyer, go ahead and state your name for the record and let us
12 hear your comments. Thank you.

13 JENNIFER SAWYER: Hi, good evening, can you hear me?

14 ALJ ALLWEIN: Yes. Thank you.

15 JENNIFER SAWYER: Wonderful. Thank you. My name is
16 Jennifer Sawyer. I am calling in from Bend, Oregon. I am a
17 lifelong Oregonian. First off, I want to thank you for
18 allowing public input on this proposal and for putting
19 together this webinar. I know that the position that you sit
20 in is not a thanked position, and I just want to say thank
21 you. I also want to say thank you to everyone who showed up
22 tonight to give public input.

23 I am a residential homeowner and my family and I are
24 sitting in the middle class and we are getting pinched to
25 death out here. This proposal is another shot in the thigh,

1 if you will, along with the cost of gas and the costs of
2 living in general. We just—we're getting pinched to death out
3 here and I'm not entirely sure when it will stop.

4 So, in giving my input here, I would like to say no
5 to this proposal as a customer of Pacific Power. Thank you
6 for your time.

7 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right, thank you very much for
8 giving us your comments tonight. Let's go to Sylvia Tanner,
9 and then Sylvia Tanner will be followed by Mark and Jen
10 Wiggins. Sylvia Tanner, go ahead and state your name for the
11 record and provide your comments. Thank you.

12 SYLVIA TANNER: Thank you for the record. I am
13 Sylvia Tanner. I'm a senior energy policy and legal analyst
14 with Multnomah County Office of Sustainability. I am also a
15 Pacific Power customer in my personal life. So, Chair Decker,
16 Commissioner Perkins and Tawney and ALJ Allwein, thank you for
17 the opportunity to speak today.

18 Pacific Power is requesting a rate increase of over
19 one-third since 2022. This is in addition to anything else
20 that might come up over the year, like the automatic
21 adjustment mechanisms I understand sometimes can contribute to
22 additional rate pressure.

23 Meanwhile, our community is strained under the
24 weight of these continuous increases. Pacific Power's service
25 territory in Multnomah County includes historic [inaudible]

1 lack that the next API communities that have and continue to
2 experience environmental and energy injustice like [inaudible]
3 that exposes them to greater heat and greater need for energy
4 to cool the spaces and heat waves. Like, limited access to
5 housing or access all their housing stock that also comes with
6 greater need for energy, and also, consequently for to greater
7 energy burden.

8 On a personal note, I've been in [inaudible] where
9 I've lived for almost 20 years. I see the rich diversity of
10 Pacific Power's customer base in my community. I see also how
11 many people are struggling with the continuous increases and
12 how these increases are really breaking people at a time where
13 everything is going up.

14 And so, I—I also feel this—I'm taking off my
15 professional hat for moment to say like, to me, this is
16 personal as well. I see it around me. I have friends who are
17 struggling and—and—and who are hurting. Along the [inaudible]
18 so far.

19 And so, I ask today, putting back my professional
20 hat, that you use your discretion to reduce Pacific Power's
21 requested increase as much as you can, centering the impacts
22 of this filing on energy justice communities that are already
23 struggling.

24 We recognize that in Multnomah County, of its
25 sustainability, the Pacific Power chain faces unique

1 challenges due to wildfire risks and other factors. However,
2 we worry about what we see in this filing as a shift of risk
3 from the company and its shareholders to customers. And we
4 ask you to evaluate carefully at that risk, especially in this
5 moment in time where communities are struggling.

6 Similarly, we see Pacific Power's requesting a 0.8%
7 increase in its return on equity at a time when, again, we're
8 hearing that our communities can't bear this continuous
9 repressure. It's just not the time.

10 Finally, moving on from specific details on the
11 filing. I would like to ask that, you know, wherever you land
12 on this increase and hopefully again, you land on the minimal
13 increase possible, that you consider also the timing of the
14 increase because as ALJ Allwein mentioned earlier, the
15 increase will hit people in the middle of heating season, in
16 January where people are experiencing high need and
17 experiencing—for a good that, you know, where we are, when
18 people are limiting demand, they're often, you know, paying a
19 price with their health.

20 And so, I know COVID in the past has brought options
21 to mitigate the time, the timing of the shock. And so, you
22 know, I know that sometimes breathing cases have been broken
23 and some of it comes in April and some comes in January.
24 Maybe all of it could come later in the year, but I encourage
25 you to consider those options here to mitigate the pain.

1 And finally, for real now, I'm closing my comments.
2 The—while I have been vocal about my concerns with utilities,
3 this cost and changes to these kind of programs, to low income
4 customer discount programs in rate cases, when they decided to
5 bring that proposal to the rate case, because I feel it's a
6 very—it's a very, procedurally unjust forum by its very
7 nature.

8 I think to the extent that energy justice advocates
9 that are intervening in this rate case now decide or want to
10 bring up a request that the company considers expanding its
11 program, I encourage you to consider that request and the
12 company, I'm sure they're listening today, to also be open to
13 it because that can be a way to mitigate some of the impact of
14 the proposal. Thank you for your opportunity to comment
15 today.

16 ALJ ALLWEIN: Well, thank you very much for your
17 comments and for that community perspective. We'll go to Mark
18 and Jen Wiggins, followed by Carol Rupnow. Mark, go ahead and
19 state your name for the record and let us hear your comments.
20 Thank you. There you go.

21 MARK CROSSAN: Okay. Are you asking for Mark
22 Crossan?

23 ALJ ALLWEIN: It doesn't say your last name. But
24 you're the one that we can hear. So, it's definitely time for
25 your comments.

1 MARK CROSSAN: Great. So, a few things. First, I'd
2 like to say that I am against the rate increase purely
3 because, I mean, I'm an accountant. I worked—I'm a certified
4 accountant and I worked for the government for 22 years and
5 did accounting related to utilities and stuff like that. So,
6 I would say that from my history, asking for a rate increase
7 of 22% in one year and 50% over two or three years is a real
8 sign of mismanagement.

9 And I think that's probably what needs to be
10 investigated is the process that's being used to approve these
11 rate increases and propose these rate increases. Something's
12 wrong with it. Because, you know, when you have people like
13 Warren Buffett, who's really smart and he's got really smart
14 people that can manipulate the books to make it, you know,
15 profitable for him. That leaves us all in the mercy of you
16 guys to save us. I mean, to prevent that from happening.

17 I'm also really concerned about the proposed rate
18 increase shows that the high users, industrial users are
19 proposed to have half of the rate increase as these elderly
20 and low income and—and that seems ridiculous. It—I would—I
21 would think that there would be a process that when the
22 Utility submits a request like this, that you guys could throw
23 it back at them and say, hey, this is ridiculous, and make
24 them produce something that is reasonable, because there's
25 nothing reasonable about this proposal. [pause]

1 So, I'd say again that the possibility of
2 mismanagement, you know, I don't know much about how the
3 company is being run or the choices that they've made that
4 would cause this kind of an increase request and funding. But
5 I think that it needs to be thoroughly investigated and, you
6 know, we depend on you guys to protect us as consumers. And
7 you're our only source to protect us. So, I hope that you
8 guys, although it's a lot of work, will go through the process
9 of really making them accountable. So, I thank you for doing
10 your jobs. All right. Thank you.

11 ALJ ALLWEIN: Thank you very much for your comments.
12 We'll go to Jen Wiggins, Carol Rupnow, and then Philip
13 Manline, I think is how you say that. But we'll start with
14 Jen Wiggins. Please say your name for the record and provide
15 us your comments. Thank you.

16 JEN WIGGINS: Yes, can you hear me?

17 ALJ ALLWEIN: Yes. Thank you.

18 JEN WIGGINS: Yes. Okay.

19 ALJ ALLWEIN: Please go ahead.

20 JEN WIGGINS: Thank you. My name is Jen Wiggins. I
21 live in Jefferson, Oregon, kind of a rural, small town. I'm
22 again, like every other caller that's called in so far against
23 the rate increase. We moved from Washington, south of
24 Seattle, to Oregon a little over two years ago. I've been
25 kind of shocked at the amount of my bill increasing. It has

1 over doubled and I've been here for a little over two years.

2 We consistently have issues with our power grid. We
3 lose power for a number of reasons. Somebody hitting a pole,
4 it's hot, it's cold, it's windy, you name it. And sometimes
5 it's over a day long. Come to find out the last summer was a
6 very hot day and our power went down. The utility workers
7 that were trying to find where the break was come to find out
8 the infrastructure was older than 50 years, well beyond its
9 life. It has deprecated to a point where we expect it to
10 break all the time.

11 And I am just very frustrated by that because any
12 budget that they have year over year should be to prioritize
13 deprecated infrastructure. And I'm not sure how in the world
14 the lifespan of our infrastructure is over double what its
15 life should be. There's been no one out here to do anything
16 but make repairs. There's been absolutely no refreshing of
17 the infrastructure in my whole county as far as I understand
18 it.

19 And I'm, again, with the gentleman that spoke right
20 before me in terms of the books, I don't understand why their
21 costs don't already include refreshing infrastructure and it's
22 not being done in a timely fashion, at least not where I'm
23 located. I don't know if other folks had that problem as
24 well.

25 But also, you know, they're asking us to basically

1 bake in their savings account and their insurance overages.
2 And when we have people that are so pinched that they have no
3 savings, I mean, you have banks out there offering over 5%
4 savings percentage because they can, because so many people
5 aren't even saving. They're just trying that deposits into
6 their institutions.

7 Now, we can, you know, buffer their savings accounts
8 and their insurance overages, but the consumer does not. The
9 consumer doesn't have the ability to. I mean, they're—go to
10 the grocery store, go get gas. You know, my insurance doubled
11 from '23 to 2024. I have to pay \$18,000 out of pocket before
12 I get anything paid for.

13 And that's the normal circumstances of people right
14 now. And even though I'm currently working and I'm not in a
15 fixed income currently, there are so many people that are.
16 And there's no way that any kind of social security or
17 whatever they have is going to keep pace with this. It's like
18 whatever resource we utilize, they are constantly asking for
19 more and we're not able to get more.

20 You know, so I'm just extremely frustrated. I don't
21 see why they need the average consumer, the residential
22 customer to support their costs on every front. You know,
23 they're passing their costs on to us when they can't even
24 update our infrastructure to actually allow us to use an
25 absolutely essential service.

1 And so, I'm fully against this. I appreciate the
2 opportunity to share my thoughts and concerns and frustrations
3 with you all. And I mean, really, everyone that's commented
4 tonight, I agree with pretty much everything. Everybody has
5 different circumstances, but it all affects us in a very big
6 way. So, I appreciate it. Thank you.

7 ALJ ALLWEIN: Well, thank you very much for your
8 comments. We appreciate them. Let's go to Carol Rupnow, and
9 she'll be followed by Philip Manline and Rosa Issela Portugal.
10 Carol Rupnow, please step up and state your name for the
11 record and let us hear your comments. Thank you.

12 STEVE RUPNOW: I'm flying under false colors here a
13 little bit. My name is Steve Rupnow. This is my wife's
14 program. Anyway—

15 ALJ ALLWEIN: That's fine. Thank you. Thanks for
16 joining us.

17 STEVE RUPNOW: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Judge.
18 Commissioners, thank you for taking the time to hear us out
19 tonight. I know you're hearing a lot of the—some of the same
20 things. I'm a transplant Oregon. I've lived here about three
21 years. I came from California where I saw Pacific Gas &
22 Electric do much of what Pacific Power is doing now.

23 And when I did, unfortunately, a short amount of
24 research on this, I found that in 2020, we had the wildfires
25 up here. 2021, Pacific Power did a rate reduction of almost

1 5% to their customers because they invested in new technology.
2 They supposedly got a whole new power system up and running.
3 They were boasting that they were on top of things. Then come
4 along 2022, they had to settle for \$290 million for the
5 wildfire infrastructure that was damaged.

6 Then suddenly double-digit increases started coming
7 in 2023, 2024, and now 2025. They're going, like the
8 gentleman said, for almost a 50% increase in the last couple
9 years. And I don't see where if we have the management in
10 place that they aren't taking care of business.

11 Let me rephrase this a minute here. Pacific Gas &
12 Electric, like I said, did much the same thing. They blew up
13 San Bruno through a lack of maintenance on their system. The
14 town of Paradise, I'm sure you've all heard of Paradise,
15 California, or what was left of it after they caused the fire
16 out there. They didn't do their due diligence. The power
17 lines that ran through there, some of their poles were over
18 100 years old.

19 You know, we're looking at a lack of maintenance on
20 their part, unfortunately, is now starting to constitute an
21 emergency on our part and we're being made to pay for their
22 lack of diligence and their lack of forethought.

23 Now, I know you cannot prevent all fires. I was a
24 firefighter for 20 years and a fire inspector for 12 and I saw
25 what those fires did to those towns, and not all of it was

1 preventable, but 98 percent of it was if they had inspected
2 the power lines like they were supposed to and spent the money
3 on the crews to go out and service the wires, clear the
4 vegetation.

5 It's not enough for them to come in and say, well,
6 we're going to shut your power down because we think we're
7 going to lose a line. Well, why are you going to lose that
8 line? Because you didn't do your vegetation management and
9 you didn't do your inspections on your wires and your poles
10 out there. And now, like I said, we're being made to pay for
11 their lack of due diligence. Thank you very much. That's all
12 I've got for you.

13 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Thank you, Mr. Rupnow, for
14 joining us and thank you for your comments. Let's go to
15 Philip Manline, followed by Rosa Issela-Portugal, and then
16 Larry. But let's start with Philip. Go ahead and state your
17 name for the record and let us hear your comments. Thank you.

18 PHILIP MANLINE: Yes. Can everybody hear me? Okay,
19 great.

20 ALJ ALLWEIN: Sure can. Sure can.

21 PHILIP MANLINE: Fantastic. My name is Philip
22 Manline. I live in Boise, Idaho. So, you might be wondering
23 why someone from Boise is listening in on this because
24 PacifiCorp owns Idaho Power. And a lot of the residents—what
25 a lot of the residents are going through today is exactly what

1 we went through about a year ago. And it seems to me that
2 there's an extreme amount of lack of accountability on behalf
3 of the management of, let's say, PacifiCorp in general.

4 And the reason why I bring this up is because we've
5 seen a lot of our smaller cities over here, their
6 infrastructures have been deteriorating no different than the
7 La Grande area, Richland while I was over in just last week,
8 Baker City.

9 Obviously, you may think this is a little bit funny,
10 but I work in the solar industry. And the reason why you may
11 find this as odd is I guess, I have a soft spot in my heart
12 for small town rural families. I've seen what the increases
13 have done here in Idaho. I can only project as what they're
14 going to do in Oregon. Yes, there are alternatives out there.
15 But in honesty, if the management would simply, the management
16 of PacifiCorp would be more accountable in the maintenance of
17 their systems, I do not believe, or I believe wholeheartedly,
18 that we're not going to see the trouble with the wildfires. I
19 don't believe we're going to see the trouble with the outages
20 here with Idaho Power.

21 And so, in short, everything that everybody has said
22 has been spot on. But from a business perspective, maybe a
23 rate increase is due, however, to this level, to this amount,
24 it's completely, completely unacceptable. So, just wanted to
25 voice my opinions for fellow little farm town people that

1 aren't on here and specifically.

2 And this will bring up one topic, I don't think
3 really what it's brought up is the irrigation costs. Our
4 farmers, that's all going to be passed on to the consumer.
5 All the additional cost, irrigation for farming, it's all
6 going to be passed down. So, there's got to be a point when
7 big business starts to be more accountable in their management
8 of their systems. Yes, we do—yes, they do have shareholders.
9 But at what point is enough enough?

10 So, just wanted to say my bits and pieces and wish
11 everybody the best.

12 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Well, thank you for your
13 comments and for joining us across the state line there.
14 Let's go to Rosa Issela-Portugal and then Larry, and then
15 we'll go to Oregon PSR. So, Rosa Issela-Portugal, please
16 state your name for the record and provide us with your
17 comments. Thank you.

18 ROSA ISSELA PORTUGAL: [Spanish]

19 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right, gracias and thank you for
20 calling in tonight and sharing your comments with us. We'll
21 go to Larry next and then we'll go to Oregon PSR and
22 *Oregonian*. Larry, go ahead and state your name for the record
23 and let us hear your comments. Thank you. [pause] It looks
24 like you may have to unmute on your end, Larry. [pause] All
25 right. Larry, you know what, we'll come back to you. Let's

1 go ahead and—it looks like you're still muted. Okay, let's go
2 ahead and go to Oregon PSR. We'll come back to you, Larry,
3 here in a minute.

4 SAMANTHA HERNANDEZ: Good evening, Commissioners.
5 Can you hear me?

6 ALJ ALLWEIN: Yes, we can. Thank you. Please go
7 ahead and let us know who you are.

8 SAMANTHA HERNANDEZ: Yes. My name is Samantha
9 Hernandez and I am the Healthy Climate Program Director at
10 Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility. We are an
11 organization of over 2000 health professionals and public
12 health advocates working to address the gravest threats to
13 health and survival. I'm also a Pacific Power customer
14 residing in northeast Portland and I'm here today to urge you
15 to deny the proposed rate increase.

16 Before the most recent rate increase went into
17 effect this year, my household's monthly utility bill averaged
18 to about \$90 a month. Since January, my household's monthly
19 utility bill has doubled, and we now pay an average of \$180 a
20 month, excluding our February utility bill, which came out to
21 an astounding \$285. Although every member of my household
22 tried their very best to conserve energy during the ice storm,
23 our utility bill almost tripled.

24 As extreme weather events become more common,
25 utility customers like me will be increasingly dependent on

1 energy to survive climate disasters like ice storms and heat
2 waves. As folks have said before me, these calculations are
3 not realistic and reflective of the current inflation crisis.

4 We are living in unprecedented times of financial
5 hardship due to record high inflation and the economic
6 consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Approving this rate
7 increase would impact energy burdened households the most.
8 Higher rates means families will have less money to purchase
9 goods for health, such as adequate shelter, as other folks
10 have said, healthy food and medical care, prescriptions,
11 doctor's appointments, things like that.

12 Additionally, I do not want my bills to go toward
13 paying for Pacific Power's negligence and wildfire liability.
14 The company and its shareholders should be responsible for
15 damages and not customers. Thank you so much for the
16 opportunity to testify.

17 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right, thank you very much for
18 joining us tonight. We appreciate those comments. Let's go
19 to the *Oregonian*, or *Oregonian* and then Larry, go ahead and
20 state your name for the record and let us hear your comments,
21 please. Thank you.

22 SPEAKER: Hello, everybody. My name is JP. I'm a
23 forester, former wildland firefighter, energy analyst. I
24 don't agree with the rate increase. I urge the Commission to
25 do everything in your power to stop this from happening.

1 We're going to just continue to see more and more tents and
2 really sad stories like some that we've already heard tonight.
3 I hope you feel it in your heart like I think I do and others
4 do. I hope you really feel this. I think you have your
5 marching orders. And that's all I have to say. Thank you.

6 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Well, thank you very much
7 for your comments and for joining us tonight. And Larry,
8 we're back to you. If you are ready, you go ahead and unmute.
9 Looks like you were unmuted there for just a second. [pause]
10 Well, Larry, if you're talking, we can't hear you. You're
11 still shown as muted here. So, we'll go ahead and we'll call
12 on Linda Nolte. And Larry, we'll try one more time with you
13 if we can. Thanks.

14 LINDA NOLTE: Thank you for letting me speak twice.
15 I apologize for maybe taking too much time, but some of the
16 other comments caused me to realize I'd left out some very key
17 important points.

18 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right.

19 LINDA NOLTE: We have an adult foster home. We have
20 a vulnerable population of people who range from mental health
21 diagnoses all the way to needing medical equipment that is run
22 by electricity. We will be written up by the state and the
23 county if we make people live in a house that's too hot,
24 doesn't have electronics for entertainment. They have very
25 strict rules to protect this very fragile population from what

1 might be perceived as abuse. And if we withhold the amenities
2 that electricity allows us to provide, we can be in a lot of
3 trouble, including legal trouble. And this is statewide. So,
4 I wanted to bring that up.

5 Secondly, I wholeheartedly agree with the comments
6 about mismanagement. Before I retired, I traveled
7 internationally and consulted with businesses and corporations
8 and tried to help those who were morally convicted about
9 running a good company and not doing it wastefully and doing
10 it humanely. And part of the calculations we did were around
11 waste and the cost of their mismanagement mistakes.

12 So, I agree with the people who are alleging, I have
13 not consulted with them, I'm speaking off the cuff, that this
14 comes from mismanagement and greed, it doesn't come from a
15 real need for rates. And again, I would hope that you would
16 hold them accountable and it's complicated. So, that was my
17 last piece.

18 I do live in Redmond, Oregon. I'm a really old
19 lady, still working, and have seen a lot. And again, I just
20 ask you please to use morality as part of your decision. And
21 I do think what they're doing is immoral. Okay, thanks again.

22 ALJ ALLWEIN: Well, thank you for those additional
23 comments. We appreciate them. And that is all of the people
24 that we have in our queue at this time. If you, if there's
25 anyone else out there that we haven't heard from that would

1 like to speak, please go ahead and use the raise your hand
2 feature, or if you're on the phone, press star 9. And Larry,
3 let's hope the third time is a charm, we'll go to you.

4 [pause]

5 Well, Larry, it still shows you as muted. And
6 apologies for that. We can't figure out how to get you on
7 here. But I would encourage you to submit comments via our
8 website or through our web portal, or you can also call
9 Consumer Services.

10 Let's see, I see, Chelsea, you've raised your hand.
11 I know you gave comments earlier, but we'll go to you one more
12 time.

13 CHELSEA CUTNAM: Oh, can you hear me?

14 ALJ ALLWEIN: Yes.

15 CHELSEA CUTNAM: Hi, my name is Chelsea Cutnam. I
16 live in Fall City, Oregon, which my power through Pacific
17 Power frequently goes out. We're kind of up in the hills a
18 little bit. So, I also worry about wildfire damage and
19 understand the need for maintenance, but it seems to me that
20 we're paying for their fines and fees from past fires due to
21 lack of preservation of their poles or maintenance and
22 whatnot.

23 I heat my home primarily through wood heat, so
24 there's not a lot of ways in which I can reduce my power as it
25 is. They send us out our bills and they give you a nice

1 little display on how your power usage holds up to other
2 families and our households, especially ones that are energy
3 efficient, which my house is very old. None of my appliances
4 are energy efficient. I don't have the money to update, and I
5 do all that I can to keep my power rate low because I can't
6 afford it. I'm using wood heat, I'm not home often, and yet
7 it's still going to increase, and it's increased for the past
8 two years. Is it going to increase every year? Is it
9 necessary? It doesn't seem like it is.

10 We can't afford it, that's all I wanted to say,
11 basically. One of many people, all these people here, that
12 have spoke today, I appreciate it and all the insight that
13 I've gotten, but we can't afford it. It's too much, too
14 often, too frequent, and we're not seeing, like, benefits.
15 So, I would hope that you would consider that and do all that
16 you can to keep it from happening because it's happening every
17 single year. Thank you.

18 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Well, thank you very much
19 for joining us. We appreciate those comments. Let's go to
20 Larry Johnson.

21 LARRY JOHNSON: Okay. Can you hear me okay, right?

22 ALJ ALLWEIN: Yes. Yes, we can hear you.

23 LARRY JOHNSON: Okay. This is the same Larry that
24 was on earlier. I had to turn my mic-grant access to my phone
25 to get the microphone. Sorry about that, guys. I really do.

1 ALJ ALLWEIN: That's all right. We're glad to
2 finally hear from you. Please go ahead. Thank you.

3 LARRY JOHNSON: Yes. Well, thank you for your
4 patience. I appreciate you being on here and giving us the
5 forum to kind of voice our opinions. I'm not going to take up
6 too much time because everything I've been wanting to say was
7 pretty much already been said. But I did want to give you
8 guys an idea as far as like I live in Madras, Oregon. We're a
9 town of about 7,700 people here. Kind of a lot of apartments.
10 It's just a small town for as far as that goes.

11 My house specifically, I have power and gas.
12 Wintertime is primary, the gas, that rate has increased since
13 the four years I've living in this house. It's been
14 increasing quite a bit. So, in the wintertime, especially
15 when it gets really cold, it gets kind of spendy. In the
16 summertime, I'm primarily on power, but it's also spending
17 because of air conditioning and everything else, it just gets
18 pretty expensive.

19 I'm kind of surprised by the rate increase request
20 of 21.6% since we just had a rate increase go into effect in
21 January for 15 percent. So, I'm a little shocked by the
22 amount that they want to go up even higher.

23 And it raises red flags in my opinion that it is,
24 whatever else has already echoed, a mismanagement of that
25 company to the point where it's almost like I think, why

1 aren't they being investigated for the way they're managing?
2 Because they've—they're shifting all the responsibility to us,
3 like someone else already mentioned as well, for us to pay for
4 their mistakes. And I don't think that's fair at all.

5 That's pretty much all I really wanted to say. Just
6 want to throw my two cents in there, guys. Thank you for your
7 time. And thanks for everybody taking the time to voice your
8 opinions. Thank you.

9 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Well, thank you very much.
10 And thanks for being persistent. We're glad we finally got to
11 hear from you. So, we appreciate those comments. Is there
12 anybody else that would like to speak tonight? We—you can use
13 the raise your hand feature, or if you're on the phone, you
14 can press star 9. [pause]

15 All right. Well, I don't see, let's see. We have a
16 couple of hands up, and the folks that have their hands up
17 have already spoken. So, I'm going to encourage you to
18 provide any additional comments in writing or through our
19 website or you can call Consumer Services. We thank everybody
20 that participated tonight. And let's go to Chair Decker for
21 some closing remarks. Chair Decker.

22 CHAIR DECKER: Thank you, Judge Allwein, and thank
23 you to all of our administrative support staff for conducting
24 a really well-organized Public Comment Hearing. And to our
25 Interpreters, the time, effort, and dedication to detail that

1 this takes.

2 It's important because, as I said at the beginning,
3 it matters that we hear from Oregonians who are customers of
4 Pacific Power. I'm impressed, as I commonly am during these
5 public comment hearings, with not only the that people are
6 facing, but also their understanding of the complexities that
7 are beginning to face the power sector and PacifiCorp in
8 particular. Some of you have recognized that we have a hard
9 job to do in sorting through what is necessary to keep the
10 system going and what is too much. And that's the work that
11 we're engaged in and your participation here is valuable to us
12 making good decisions in that work.

13 I don't have anything else other than to appreciate
14 the time that people have taken tonight. Commissioners, would
15 you like to add a word of thanks?

16 COMMISSIONER PERKINS: Sure, I'll jump in. Yeah, I
17 really appreciate people taking the time. It's a very tough
18 topic, and you can hear the emotion in people's voices. So,
19 just appreciate you taking the time, and stay tuned, stay
20 engaged as these rate cases proceed. It takes months to get
21 through rate cases, so there will be a lot to follow as we
22 proceed.

23 COMMISSIONER TAWNEY: I just echo that thanks and
24 spending your evening with us and sharing your thoughts.

25 ALJ ALLWEIN: All right. Thank you all. Just a

1 reminder to everybody, a recording of tonight's hearing will
2 be available on the Commission's website soon, probably within
3 the next day or so. This concludes the Public Comment Hearing
4 in Docket Nos. UE 433 and UE 434. And again, I would
5 encourage you to follow up with written comments. And as the
6 commissioners have suggested, stay engaged and follow these
7 cases as we go through the process. Thanks again to everybody
8 for participating tonight. We are adjourned.

9 [end of hearing]

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPT

I, Jaime Caris, as the Official Transcriber, hereby certify that the attached proceedings before the Administrative Law Judge,

In the Matter of:

PACIFICORP'S PROPOSED

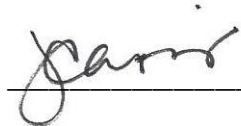
RATE INCREASE

Docket No. UE 433, UE 434

Public Comment

were held as herein appears and that this is the original transcript thereof and that the statements that appear in this transcript were transcribed by me to the best of my ability.

I further certify that this transcript is a true, complete and accurate record of the proceeding that took place in this matter on April 30, 2024 via Zoom conference call.



Jaime Caris
Always On Time
May 13, 2024