External Email

Dear UTC Commissioners,

Our fate will be determined in the next 20 years. It will be determined by the policies we enact and descions we make on how to transition to a green future. It depends on whether we adhere to guidelines set out by experts on our energy usage and the rate at which we use up our limited carbon budget. And yet, PSE, Washington's largest and most expensive energy utility, is condemning our chances. Puget Sound Energy's draft 2021 Integrated Resource Plan fails to align with 2019's Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA) requiring utilities to be 80 percent carbon free by 2030. The science shows PSE must act by building more renewable energy and storage infrastructure sooner, retiring the Colstrip coal plant before 2025, and cancelling the Tacoma LNG and any other planned fossil gas plants, expansions or pipelines. Despite the instrumental role PSE holds in determining if our state can achieve its climate goals, PSE's initial draft of this critical 20-year plan includes building and expanding fossil fuel infrastructure while exploiting the cost cap loophole in the Energy Transformation Act.

Future investment planning should involve all the relevant stakeholders. As customers using and paying for the energy that PSE chooses for us, we are complicit, and we are demanding better. We need an equity evaluation that analyzes potential impacts on Treaty rights, communities already experiencing health disparities and high levels of pollution, and communities that have been historically marginalized. This evaluation should span the project's life cycle impacts. Fossil fuel extraction and refining, including fossil gas, has a long and ugly history of harm through land and resource theft from man camps that have been linked to the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women to the disruption of small communities to destruction of habitat and the ability to subsist off the land; and processes that leave behind communities rocked by cancer, birth defects, and other serious health concerns. It's time to leave these practices in the past and invest in less harmful energy. We are also demanding more transparency in how PSE forecasts future energy demand, inquiry into the validity of construction costs passed onto customers, and a public engagement process that facilitates customers and stakeholders having an actual say in where our money goes and the implications of what powers our homes.

Sincerely, Peter Fink White Salmon, WA 98672 hfink2@uw.edu