

**Docket Nos. UE-220066, UG-22067 and UG-210918
(Consolidated) - Vol. III**

**WUTC v. Puget Sound Energy / In the Matter of the
Petition of Puget Sound Energy**

September 28, 2022



206.287.9066 | 800.846.6989

1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 1840, Seattle, Washington 98101

www.buellrealtime.com

email: info@buellrealtime.com



BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND	)	DOCKETS UE-220066 and
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,	)	UG-220067
	)	(Consolidated)
Complainant,)	
)	
vs.	)	ORDER 20
)	
PUGET SOUND ENERGY,)	
)	
Respondent.)	
)	
)	
In the Matter of the Petition	)	DOCKET UG-210918
of)	
)	
PUGET SOUND ENERGY	)	ORDER 06
)	
For an Order Authorizing	)	GRANTING PSE's MOTION
Deferred Accounting Treatment	)	TO MODIFY PROCEDURAL
for Puget Sound Energy's Share	)	SCHEDULE, IN PART;
of Costs Associated with the	)	DENYING MOTION IN
Tacoma LNG Facility	)	PART

VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING
VOLUME III
PAGES 139-240

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
621 Woodland Square Loop Southeast
Lacey, Washington 98503

(All participants appeared via videoconference.)

DATE TAKEN: SEPTEMBER 28, 2022
REPORTED BY: ROSE DETLOFF, RMR, CRR, CCR #21036100

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

A P P E A R A N C E S

COMMISSIONERS:

DAVE DANNER, Chair
ANN RENDAHL, Commissioner
MILT DOUMIT, Commissioner

COMMISSION STAFF:

ANDREW ROBERTS

PUBLIC COUNSEL:

SHAY BAUMANN

* * * * *

1 LACEY, WASHINGTON; SEPTEMBER 28, 2022

2 6:00 p.m.

3 -o0o-

4 P R O C E E D I N G S

5

6 CHAIR DANNER: Let's go on the record.

7 Good evening, everyone. Today is September
8 28th, 2022, and this is a virtual comment hearing of the
9 Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission in
10 Dockets UE-220066 and UG-220067.

11 I'm Dave Danner. I'm Chair of the Commission,
12 and I'm joined by my colleagues, Commissioner Ann
13 Rendahl and Commissioner Milt Doumit.

14 We are here this evening to take comments from
15 the public regarding Puget Sound Energy's request to
16 raise both electric and natural gas rates effective
17 January 1st of 2023. Last January 31st, Puget Sound
18 Energy filed a request with the Commission to increase
19 electric and gas rates over the next three years. This
20 is the Company's first rate case --

21 (Interruption in the proceedings.)

22 CHAIR DANNER: All right. This is the
23 Company's first rate case since the passage of Senate
24 Bill 5295 in 2021, which, among other things, requires
25 utilities, for the first time, to file multiyear rate

1 plans which include measures to assess the Company's
2 performance in many areas of its operations.

3 Rate proceedings before the Commission must
4 comply with the State's Administrative Procedure Act,
5 which means the Commissioners act as judges in a trial
6 setting where parties present written and oral testimony
7 that are subject to cross-examination by other parties.
8 The Commission's decisions on this proceeding must be
9 based solely on the evidentiary record.

10 There are -- let me say a few words about this
11 case. There are 16 formal parties to the proceeding,
12 including the Company, the Commission Staff, and the
13 Public Counsel Unit of the Washington Attorney General's
14 Office. By law, Public Counsel represents the interests
15 of residential and small business customers of PSE, and
16 all of these parties are represented by counsel.

17 There are three proposed settlements in the
18 case before us which combine and resolve all of the
19 issues in the proceeding.

20 One proposed settlement addresses costs
21 associated with PSE's Green Direct program, a voluntary
22 program that provides corporations and government
23 entities the ability to purchase up to 100 percent of
24 their energy from renewable sources. No party opposes
25 this portion of this proposed settlement.

1 The second proposed settlement addresses the
2 recovery and utility rates of certain costs associated
3 with the Tacoma Liquefied Natural Gas Project, part of
4 which serves as a peaking resource for Puget's natural
5 gas customers.

6 This proposed settlement is joined by Puget
7 Sound Energy, the Commission Staff, the Alliance of
8 Western Energy Consumers, Walmart, Kroger, and Nucor
9 Steel. It is opposed by the Office of Public Counsel,
10 the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, and The Energy Project.

11 The third proposed settlement addresses all
12 other issues in the case, including the Company's
13 authorized return on equity, capital structure, and
14 authorized overall rate of return. If approved, this
15 proposed settlement would authorize a two-year rate plan
16 with total revenue increase of \$293 million in the first
17 year and \$56 million in the second year.

18 The third proposed settlement is joined by all
19 parties except the Office of Public Counsel, which
20 opposes the proposed return on equity, and the Coalition
21 of Eastside Neighborhoods for Sensible Energy or CENSE,
22 which opposes the inclusion of costs associated with
23 PSE's Energize Eastside transmission project.

24 So this evening, we will take comment from
25 members of the public who are not formal parties to this

1 case. Your views are important to us and provide
2 insights on various matters to be addressed in the rate
3 case. All of the comments we receive tonight will be
4 recorded by the court reporter and made part of the
5 formal record in the case.

6 There are some ground rules. As I said before,
7 the Commissioners serve as judges, and for this reason,
8 we are here to listen. We cannot engage in debate or
9 discussion with commenters, and we cannot answer
10 questions you have about the case.

11 Public Counsel represents the interests of the
12 customers, and you should direct questions about the
13 case to them. Shay Baumann of Public Counsel is in
14 attendance tonight, and Public Counsel can be reached,
15 if you have questions, by e-mailing them at
16 utility@atg.wa.gov.

17 Also, be aware that before we begin, I will ask
18 all who plan to speak to be sworn in. Your comments --
19 we will take them orally. We will not be taking
20 comments in the chat. So all matters in the chat are
21 just logistical. And so do not provide any substantive
22 comments in the chat, please.

23 All right. I'm now going to turn to Andrew
24 Roberts, the UTC's public involvement representative,
25 who will cover some logistics.

1 So, Andrew?

2 MR. ROBERTS: All right. I'm having some
3 bandwidth issues, so I'm going to leave my video off.

4 CHAIR DANNER: Okay.

5 MR. ROBERTS: My name is Andrew Roberts.
6 I'm a public involvement representative with the
7 Utilities and Transportation Commission, and I would
8 like to cover some logistics before we begin the comment
9 hearing this evening.

10 First, we ask everyone to please mute your
11 connections unless you're called on to speak. If you're
12 participating via Zoom, you can mute your connection by
13 clicking the microphone. A slash will appear across the
14 microphone indicating you have muted your connection.
15 To unmute, click the microphone again, and the slash
16 will disappear. After you're done speaking, please
17 remember to mute yourself again by pressing that
18 microphone.

19 The same process applies if you called in via
20 the phone. You press star six to mute your connection.
21 Star six, again, will unmute yourself, and after you're
22 done speaking, please press star six to mute yourself
23 one more time.

24 Please wait to be called on for comment, and do
25 not interrupt other speakers. There are two options for

1 you to report technical difficulties. You can use the
2 chat feature in Zoom, or you can call Ryan Smith at
3 360-664-1165. Once again, that's 360-664-1165.

4 The chat feature should only be used to report
5 technical difficulties. We don't collect public comment
6 from the chat feature. You can submit public comments
7 by e-mailing comments, C-O-M-M-E-N-T-S, @utc.wa.gov or
8 calling 888-333-9882. You can ask to speak with me,
9 Andrew Roberts.

10 Next, we'll need to get to the names for those
11 who would like to speak. I believe we have asked folks
12 who are using Zoom to use the chat feature to input your
13 name. If you haven't done so yet, you can do that. If
14 you contacted us previously to provide your name for
15 this comment hearing, we already have that on the
16 sign-in sheet.

17 So for folks who are calling in and your last
18 name begins A through E, I would like to ask you to
19 unmute yourselves and provide us your first and last
20 name. Please spell your last name. Once again, that's
21 A through E.

22 MS. DAY: Esther Day, D-A-Y.

23 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Esther.

24 MS. ANTMAN: Iris Antman, A-N-T-M-A-N.

25 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Iris.

1 MR. BRIGGS: Rob Briggs, B-R-I-G-G-S.

2 MS. BLACKMON: Michelle Blackmon,
3 B-L-A-C-K-M-O-N.

4 MR. CANNING: Orion Canning, C-A-N-N-I-N-G.

5 MR. ARENT: Shawn Arent, A-R-E-N-T.

6 MR. ANDERSON: And I'm Neal Anderson,
7 A-N-D-E-R-S-O-N.

8 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Neal.

9 We're copying these down as we go along, so I'd
10 like to ask folks to please slow down so we can
11 transcribe those.

12 MR. BERNTHAL: Jim Bernthal,
13 B-E-R-N-T-H-A-L.

14 MS. ARNOLD: Oneida Arnold, A-R-N-O-L-D.

15 MS. CHURCH: Barbara Church, C-H-U-R-C-H.

16 MR. ROBERTS: Okay. Last call for last
17 names beginning A through E.

18 MS. BLACKMON: I don't know if you got mine.

19 MS. BROWN: Was it just people on phone only
20 or people connected via computers and else who need to
21 sign up now? If so, Krys Brown, B-R-O-W-N.

22 MS. BLACKMON: Michelle Blackmon,
23 B-L-A-C-K-M-O-N.

24 MS. BONSIGNORE: Hi, can you get me now?
25 Julia. Are you guys ready?

1 MR. ROBERTS: Julia, what's your last name?

2 MS. BONSIGNORE: Yeah. Last name is
3 Bonsignore, B-O-N-S-I-G-N-O-R-E.

4 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you.

5 MR. MCKEE: I guess I'll give you my name.
6 Patrick McKee, M-C-K-E-E.

7 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Patrick.

8 Okay. Any other last names beginning A through
9 E?

10 MR. DAMIANO: Frank Damiano.

11 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Frank. I think we
12 have you on the sign-in sheet.

13 Okay. Moving on to F through J.

14 MR. GOTTSCHALL: This is Mark Gottschall. I
15 think I'm on the sheet. I registered to present. Do
16 you have that, Andrew?

17 MR. ROBERTS: Yes, we have that. Thank you.

18 MR. GOTTSCHALL: One quick question. Sorry.
19 Given the number of people on the call and the number of
20 presenters, do you have a list of who is presenting so,
21 we know, if we have to take a bathroom break, for
22 example, when we can do that and not be missed? Do you
23 have anything like that? Thank you.

24 MR. ROBERTS: We don't have anything that
25 we're going to share during the meeting. So I guess the

1 short answer to that is no.

2 CHAIR DANNER: So --

3 MR. GOTTSCHALL: I presented -- sorry, Dave.

4 I provided a PDF. I was told that that could
5 be presented. So I created a PDF, which was basically
6 from a PowerPoint, and I sent it in to
7 comments@utc.wa.gov as instructed. So I am presuming
8 that for all these people on the call, they will be able
9 to see that presentation. Is that going to happen?

10 MR. ROBERTS: No. That's typically not how
11 we do these. Typically, it's just verbal comment.

12 CHAIR DANNER: So, yes. The PowerPoint that
13 you sent in is a written comment that is part of the
14 record, but it will not be presented tonight.

15 MR. RALEIGH: Dave, can you tell me what
16 will be presented other than people telling you some
17 words and then also just simply not actually having them
18 heard?

19 CHAIR DANNER: So people are going to tell
20 us their views on this case. We are not making
21 presentations tonight. This is a public comment
22 hearing. We are hearing your comments, and they will be
23 made part of the record in the case, and they will be
24 considered by the Commissioners when they are deciding
25 this case.

1 So we are not doing a give-and-take. This is
2 not presentations to the public. This is a public
3 comment hearing where we are taking testimony that will
4 be part of the record.

5 MR. GOTTSCHALL: So will the presentations
6 that I submitted, for example, be part of the record?

7 CHAIR DANNER: Yes. They will be part of
8 the record.

9 MR. GOTTSCHALL: Thank you.

10 MR. IVEY: Tony Ivey. Last name, Ivey,
11 I-V-E-Y.

12 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Tony.

13 MS. HOLLAND: Holland, H-O-L-L-A-N-D.

14 MR. ROBERTS: And the first name for our
15 transcriber?

16 MS. HOLLAND: Teresa, T-E-R-E-S-A.

17 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you.

18 Anybody else last name F through J?

19 Okay. Last names K through O?

20 MS. KERN: Mary Kern, K-E-R-N.

21 MS. KELLER: Jennifer Keller.

22 MS. KERN: K-E-R-N.

23 MS. KELLER: Jennifer Keller, K-E-L-L-E-R.

24 MS. KIMMERLING: Marilyn Kimmerling,
25 K-I-M-M-E-R-L-I-N-G.

1 MR. MARSH: Don Marsh, M-A-R-S-H.

2 MR. ROBERTS: Okay. I'd like to ask folks
3 to please slow down again. We are transcribing these as
4 you provide them to us.

5 MS. DOUGLASS: I apologize. I missed your A
6 through F. This is Desiree Douglass. Douglass,
7 D-O-U-G-L-A-S-S. Desiree, D-E-S-I-R-E-E.

8 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Thank you. We
9 got you.

10 MS. KORTEN: This is Fran Korten,
11 K-O-R-T-E-N. First name is Fran, F-R-A-N.

12 MR. MCKEE: And it's Pat McKee. I apologize
13 for jumping the queue. But you got me, right?

14 MR. ROBERTS: We have you, Pat. Thank you.

15 MS. OAKS: Stacy Oaks, O-A-K-S.

16 MS. LUCAS: Kyle Lucas, L-U-C-A-S.

17 MR. LAGESTEE: Todd Lagestee. Lima, Alpha,
18 Golf, Echo, Sierra, Tango, Echo, Echo. L-A-G-E-S-T-E-E.
19 And I called in. I don't know if you have my name from
20 the call-in sheet. Thank you.

21 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Anyone else with
22 last names K through O?

23 MR. OHLSON: Richie Ohlson, O-H-L-S-O-N.

24 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Thank you. All
25 right. If there are no more with K through O, let's

1 move to P through T.

2 Anyone's last names beginning P through T who
3 has not put their name in the chat or previously signed
4 up?

5 MS. PONZIO: Rebecca Ponzio, P-O-N-Z-I-O.

6 CHAIR DANNER: Thank you.

7 MS. PRINTZ: Peggy Printz, P-R-I-N-T-Z.

8 CHAIR DANNER: Thank you.

9 All right. Anyone whose last names begin U
10 through Z?

11 MR. VOGET: Rich Voget, V-O-G-E-T.

12 CHAIR DANNER: Thank you.

13 MS. VODA: Lorelei, L-O-R-E-L-E-I. Voda,
14 V-O-D-A.

15 CHAIR DANNER: Thank you.

16 MR. VAN VOAST: Jordan Van Voast, V-A-N,
17 V-O-A-S-T. First name, Jordan, like the river.

18 CHAIR DANNER: Thank you.

19 All right. Is there anyone who has not given
20 us their name who wishes to speak tonight? Okay.

21 So -- Claire Richards?

22 MS. RICHARDS: Yes, that would be me.

23 CHAIR DANNER: All right. We've got your
24 name. Thank you.

25 MS. RICHARDS: Thank you.

1 CHAIR DANNER: All right. For all those
2 wishing to comment tonight, can I ask you please to -- I
3 need to swear you in. Can I ask you to please raise
4 your right hand.

5 (Members of the public sworn.)

6 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Thank you very
7 much. Let us get started, then.

8 I'm going to start with Rebecca Ponzio. Would
9 you like to go first?

10 MS. PONZIO: Happily. Thank you.

11 Good evening. My name is Rebecca Ponzio. I'm
12 the climate and fossil fuel program director at
13 Washington Environmental Council and Washington
14 Conservation Voters.

15 I'm taking time this evening to urge you to
16 deny prudence of the Tacoma LNG Project and ensure that
17 ratepayers do not have to pay for this expensive and
18 poorly-conceived project.

19 This project is problematic in many ways, and I
20 want to highlight a couple. The facility has known
21 safety and environmental justice impacts, adding
22 pollution and risk to an already overburdened community,
23 including storage of large quantities of explosive fuels
24 in an urban area, release of air pollution like methane,
25 nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter.

1 And secondly, PSE has consistently greenwashed
2 this project under the guise of clean energy, and yet
3 this project undermines our State commitment and laws
4 around climate action by adding these large quantities
5 of methane and climate pollution to the atmosphere.

6 The fact that PSE has moved forward with this
7 project before all its permits were issued, that there
8 continues to be an appeal in play around the rigor of
9 its analysis of impacts, and that the Puyallup Tribe and
10 the broader community have consistently opposed its
11 development are all important issues to weigh for the
12 Commission.

13 This project is a good example of why utilities
14 like PSE need oversight and accountability on their
15 investments and how those should be paid for. As our
16 state transitions to low-carbon clean energy,
17 Washingtonians should not be paying for projects that
18 bring in more gas and result in more climate pollution.

19 I urge you to deny prudence of the Tacoma LNG
20 Project and ensure ratepayers do not pay for this
21 harmful project that already disproportionately harms
22 highly-impacted and vulnerable communities that live in
23 the Port of Tacoma. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: This is Commissioner
25 Rendahl. It appears that Dave Danner may have frozen,

1 and I'm going to see if I can find the sign-in sheet
2 that we had.

3 Unless, Andrew Roberts, you can call the next
4 person and identify the next three people in line.

5 MR. ROBERTS: Okay. So the sign-in sheet I
6 have has Becky Rhodes, Marilyn -- I apologize if I
7 pronounce this wrong -- Kimmerling.

8 MS. KIMMERLING: Kimmerling.

9 MR. ROBERTS: Kimmerling. Thank you.

10 And Glenn Allison.

11 So, Becky Rhodes, if you're here, please go
12 first.

13 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Is Becky Rhodes
14 there?

15 MS. GATELESS: Becky, you're on mute.

16 MS. RHODES: I didn't want to speak. I
17 thought you just wanted everybody to sign in.

18 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. If you don't
19 wish to speak, thank you. I'm glad you're here joining
20 us. And we will move on to the next person.

21 MS. RHODES: And Marilyn is the same. She
22 thought it was just to sign in.

23 MS. KIMMERLING: No, no. I'm fine with
24 speaking.

25 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

1 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Excuse me.

2 Marilyn?

3 MS. KIMMERLING: Yeah. I want to go on
4 record as being against the rate increase for several
5 reasons.

6 PSE wants to pass the cost of putting this
7 monstrosity together onto the ratepayers. I don't use
8 any natural LNG or methane. They're going to sell more
9 than 97 percent of the LNG to private entities for
10 marine fuel. How does that benefit me or the people of
11 Tacoma?

12 I'm outraged at this whole thing. More than 40
13 percent of the facility's cost is what they want to pass
14 onto us when, as ratepayers, even if you do use LNG,
15 they're only going to use 2 percent of the LNG produced
16 at the plant and only for ten years.

17 This is a boondoggle. If a company is -- a
18 corporation is a for-profit corporation, then they need
19 to make their money elsewhere than off of the backs of
20 the people who have no choice.

21 So that is my objection to it. I don't want to
22 subsidize their for-profit business. And that's what I
23 have to say.

24 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you very much.

25 So someone had asked in the chat what's the

1 format. So we are taking the people who signed up ahead
2 of time first, and then we will go in order of the
3 people who we took just now in line.

4 So the next person who had signed up to
5 speak -- and I will tell you the next three -- is Glenn
6 Allison, Mark Kaplan, and Pam Leung.

7 So, Glenn Allison, are you on the call? And
8 you will have about one minute to make comment, and then
9 we will need to move forward because we have 133 people
10 on this call.

11 So, Glenn Allison, are you available? Okay.

12 I apologize for the siren in the background.

13 Mark Kaplan, are you available to make public
14 comment?

15 MR. KAPLAN: Thanks, Ann. Mark Kaplan. I
16 actually am going to pass. I think what was discussed
17 at the beginning of the call as far as the reasons to
18 not do it sounds sound. So I will defer my comments.
19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. Thank you.

21 And, Pam Leung? Pam Leung? L-E-U-N-G? All
22 right.

23 The next three folks in line on the original
24 sign-up list are Frank Damiano, Edmond Lee, and Mary
25 Kern.

1 Frank Damiano, please go ahead.

2 MR. DAMIANO: Okay. My statement is
3 specifically about the return on equity.

4 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead.

5 MR. DAMIANO: I'm autistic, and I have a
6 brain injury, but I can get through this.

7 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Yes, you can. Please
8 go ahead.

9 MR. DAMIANO: Since when am I supposed to be
10 providing a company with a return on investment? I am
11 not a stock to be bought and sold. I'm not an
12 interest-bearing account. I'm a customer.

13 There's no way I should be charged interest on
14 an investment that they're making profit on. I'm paying
15 for a service, and I'm not supposed to be price-gouged
16 for a utility, especially when the utility is a
17 necessity.

18 Puget Sound Energy has on their website that 46
19 percent of the energy that they provide comes from their
20 own plants, and they say that more than one-third of
21 that is from hydroelectrics. They state that they are
22 the fourth largest wind-energy producer in the United
23 States.

24 In other words, they're getting most of their
25 energy for free. Damn it. Pass the savings onto us.

1 There.

2 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you for your
3 comments.

4 Edmond Lee? Edmond Lee had signed up to speak
5 in advance.

6 Okay. The next person is Mary Kern.

7 MS. KERN: Hi. Thank you for the
8 opportunity to speak today by all means.

9 This request for increasing our gas and
10 electricity is another astronomical hit to the people of
11 Washington. People cannot afford those, especially
12 those on fixed income or low-income folks.

13 People don't buy new cars because we can't
14 afford them. Now the dealerships are telling us that
15 they aren't making parts for vehicles in the 2000s.
16 This is forcing people to buy new vehicles at these high
17 prices, paying higher fees, higher repair costs, and if
18 electric, maybe paying \$22,000 when the battery needs
19 replacing.

20 Food prices are doubling. Property taxes.
21 Today I received my property valuation notice, and it's
22 up \$154,000, which shows huge increases, again, next
23 year for property taxes. My property taxes are now
24 around \$6,800 this year, and approximately 3,600 of that
25 is for school taxes alone.

1 Fixed-income folks are being taxed out of their
2 homes. Their cut-off point for adjustment appeals is
3 too low for marginal folks to get help with the
4 reduction.

5 Now PSE is proposing an approximate 20 percent
6 increase in gas and electric. If this is to support the
7 Green New Deal, then I suggest you get it from the Fed's
8 new \$2 trillion Inflation Reduction Act, which includes
9 huge funding for the Green New Deal. The Green New Deal
10 will now need a 1,000 percent increase in mining to
11 support wind and solar to meet the needs for energy
12 replacements for oil and gas.

13 Currently, California can't even supply their
14 own needs and are telling people to shut down their air
15 conditioning and other items from approximately 4:00 to
16 8:00 p.m.

17 Years back, PSE was encouraging folks to
18 convert to gas as it was supposed to be cleaner and
19 cheaper, so folks invested huge dollars to make those
20 changes. Now another change is being requested to
21 convert to solar.

22 My suggestion is to follow the money on these
23 issues to find out who exactly is profiting from these
24 decisions. Well, we know that certain people are making
25 big investments into Tesla, as the government is now

1 switching to Tesla vehicles.

2 For 50 years now, we have been hearing about
3 the world coming to an end, and each predicted date has
4 passed. Now we are on to another one. Why are we
5 succumbing to these things that are not common sense?
6 Can we please have some strong leadership step up and
7 help rein this in and do the common sense steps to
8 continue our already good environmental practices that
9 don't turn the world upside down?

10 The bottom line is we can't afford this high
11 hit on another area of our finances. I respectfully
12 request that this increase be declined. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you, Mary.

14 The next three folks in line are Cindy Kisska,
15 Mark Gottschall, and Chris Rohwer.

16 Cindy, are you available?

17 MS. KISSKA: Yes, I am.

18 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead.

19 MS. KISSKA: My name is Cindy Kisska. I've
20 been a Puget Sound Energy electric customer for over 18
21 years. I've recently spent three years researching
22 Puget Sound Energy, 2019, 2020, and '21, and would like
23 to share what I've uncovered. The points I'm going to
24 share are very important to all Puget Sound Energy
25 customers.

1 And so the first thing I want to say --

2 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: So, Cindy, I'm just
3 going to ask, because we have a lot of people on the
4 call, if you can keep your comments to one minute --

5 MS. KISSKA: One minute?

6 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Yes. And if you have
7 something --

8 MS. KISSKA: One minute?

9 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: If you have
10 something --

11 MS. KISSKA: One minute?

12 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Yes.

13 MS. KISSKA: Excuse me, ma'am. We have one
14 day that we can call in a year, even just one hour, and
15 now you're telling me I have one minute? Excuse me?
16 You people should spend a little more time listening to
17 us.

18 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: So I have a
19 suggestion. If you have something in writing you would
20 like to submit to us, we --

21 MS. KISSKA: No. I want to speak it. I
22 want to speak it so everybody can hear it. The
23 customers at Puget Sound Energy -- okay. So let me
24 start.

25 Puget Sound Energy should not be allowed to use

1 multiyear rate plans. Instead, they should be held to
2 account every single year so they're forced to be
3 completely transparent.

4 Right now, it is a known fact that Puget Sound
5 Energy has not been transparent about their finances.
6 On July 28th of this year, the Public Counsel Unit of
7 UTC became involved in two court cases against Puget
8 Sound Energy. The testimony at court revealed that
9 Puget Sound Energy has lied and been dishonest many
10 times, manipulating and misrepresenting their financial
11 facts to try to get more money.

12 Shocking that this is our utility company and
13 who you, the Commissioners, have to deal with. It's
14 impossible to find the honest truth when dealing with
15 Puget Sound Energy, and we, the customers, bear the
16 cruelty of their dishonesty.

17 Another thing is, when we are lumped in, that
18 the Commissioners say -- sorry -- the AGO, the Attorney
19 General's Office, says that the shareholders' interests
20 and the customers' interests and all the interests are
21 supposed to be treated fair, equal, et cetera.

22 And shareholders' interests and customers'
23 interests are completely different because we need --
24 our interests are keeping our houses warm and being able
25 to afford Puget Sound Energy's ever-rising electric

1 bills. Shareholders' interests are just a matter of
2 making more money. And that way, it's like Puget Sound
3 Energy is making the wealthy even wealthier.

4 You know, this is really sad to me that you're,
5 like -- I'm having to hurry. I have a lot to say, and I
6 can't even say it properly because I feel so stressed
7 because I have no time to say it. And you people
8 seriously -- how can you tell us that we only have one
9 minute to speak a year? A year.

10 MS. BONSIGNORE: Listen, ma'am. You're not
11 the only one waiting to talk. So just let us talk.
12 Take your time.

13 MS. KISSKA: Can I take my time? Because it
14 has to do with everybody here. These are things
15 everyone should know.

16 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: So, Cindy, please
17 take another minute or so. There are other people who
18 are waiting to speak as well. And I appreciate --

19 MS. KISSKA: Can I let everyone speak first,
20 and I'll speak at the end? How's that? How's that?

21 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: If we have time at
22 the end. I appreciate your comments.

23 MS. KISSKA: Please let me speak at the end.
24 Please take the time to hear what I have to say. Let
25 everyone else speak first. I don't mind. Okay?

1 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. Thank you.

2 We are going to move on to Mark Gottschall. Is
3 Mark Gottschall on the call? Mark Gottschall?

4 Okay. The next person who had signed up to
5 speak is Chris Rohwer. Is Chris Rohwer available?

6 MR. ROHWER: I am. Thank you very much.

7 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you. Go ahead.

8 MR. ROHWER: Yeah. I want to tailgate on
9 Mary Kern's comments.

10 The announcement for the rate increases
11 indicated decarbonization and State mandates. Now, we
12 can deal with our State legislatures on the mandates.
13 It would be interesting to know what they are. But
14 where are we headed with this decarbonization situation?

15 Let's review the bidding. What's happening in
16 Germany? Germany is shutting down -- has shut down
17 several of their nuclear plants in an effort to
18 decarbonize their system. They then became dependent on
19 natural gas from Russia. That supply has been shut
20 down, and Germany is suffering some of the greatest rate
21 increases and cost increases for energy in their
22 history.

23 The CEO from ArcelorMittal in Germany said,
24 "With a tenfold increase in gas and electricity prices,
25 which we had to accept within a few months, we are no

1 longer competitive in a market that is 25 percent
2 supplied by imports. We see an urgent need for
3 political action to get energy prices under control
4 immediately."

5 One baker in our local area has seen the
6 monthly gas bills go from 3,000 euros earlier this year
7 to 11,000 euros. That's a huge increase. Are we headed
8 that way with our decarbonization program?

9 California, who has abandoned base load,
10 reliable, continuous energy sources is now 37 percent
11 dependent upon imported energy with 35 percent solar and
12 wind. So at 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon, when the sun
13 goes down, the energy demands go up, and the energy is
14 not there. California is suffering blackouts due to
15 this approach to energy -- deconstructing our energy
16 system -- our reliable energy systems.

17 Is Washington going to follow the footsteps of
18 Germany, UK, California, to totally unreliable and
19 disastrous energy policies of decarbonization? Is
20 Washington State and Puget Sound Energy going to ignore
21 the hundreds of scientists that condemn the so-called
22 climate crisis claims in high-risk, low-reward green
23 energy policies? Is Puget Sound Energy going to leave
24 their customers like me high and dry without ready,
25 reliable, and affordable supplies?

1 And by the way, why wasn't affordability
2 mentioned as one of the objectives of this Commission
3 and of Puget Sound Energy? They offer reliable and
4 safe, but not affordable? And I'm not even sure it's
5 going to be reliable anymore. Look what's happening,
6 again, in Germany and the UK and California.

7 I pay an average of about \$250 a month for
8 gas --

9 MR. ROBERTS: You're well over a minute at
10 this point.

11 MR. ROHWER: I'm almost done.

12 So I'm asking, can you guarantee that our rate
13 increases won't be eventually three times or ten
14 times -- ten times is a thousand percent -- after you
15 decarbonize our energy systems?

16 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

17 So the next speaker is Toni Kornec. Is Toni
18 Kornec available?

19 MS. KORNEC: I choose not to speak. Thank
20 you.

21 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. Thank you.

22 The next person who signed up was Vicky Cully.
23 The next after that is Teresa Holland, and then the last
24 person on the original sign-up list is Julia Bonsignore.

25 So, Vicky Cully, if you're available, please go

1 ahead. Again, Vicky Cully.

2 MS. CULLY: Yeah. I just unmuted. I was
3 mainly here to get information. I think people are
4 summing up what I had wanted to say.

5 In a nutshell, we can't afford this. We
6 simply -- most of us cannot. And I appreciate
7 everybody's comments. They're really excellent. Thank
8 you. Over.

9 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you very much,
10 Vicky.

11 Teresa Holland, you're next.

12 MS. HOLLAND: Hi, there. Thank you for
13 having me. I just have a few points to make and then a
14 comment to the Commission.

15 I agree with Chris about the decarbonization of
16 our energy systems. I think we should take a great
17 pause in this for right now. We have so many forces in
18 our economy and in our country now that this is not the
19 time to do this. I really don't think it is.

20 A couple things. The reason I'm here is
21 because I got the notice in my mail, and thank God I
22 still get printed things because I would have never
23 known about this meeting.

24 I'm just curious as to why the Commission feels
25 that they won't be able to provide continued safe and

1 reliable energy without this increase and that you
2 discuss recovering your operating costs. How are your
3 customers, your clients, supposed to recover their
4 operating costs by you passing on this increase to them?

5 And I think that Frank mentioned that --

6 (Interruption in the proceedings.)

7 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Sorry.

8 Marilyn Kimmerling, if you could please mute
9 your line so Teresa Holland can finish.

10 Go ahead, Teresa.

11 MS. KIMMERLING: I was talking to my dog.

12 Sorry.

13 MS. HOLLAND: Thank you, Ann.

14 And I agree with Frank on the return on equity.
15 That is -- you know, as a finance major, I find this
16 ludicrous that we are paying for either your failures in
17 your investments or that you want to make more money on
18 your investments.

19 I don't know anybody that is making 9.9 percent
20 on anything. Look at the stock market right now. I
21 mean, it's crazy out there. Look at people's pension
22 plans. People are suffering.

23 And then -- okay. Finally, this is my closing
24 statement. You are proposing a 19.62 percent increase
25 from 2023 to 2025. This is in the midst of a historic

1 recession, spiraling inflation, that's really going to
2 spiral out to double-digit inflation.

3 If any of you were alive during the late '70s
4 or early '80s, you know what this means. This is not
5 the time to do this. I'm not saying that you don't
6 have -- you shouldn't have the ability to raise rates,
7 but this is not the time. Thank you for your time.
8 Appreciate it.

9 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

10 And the last person who signed up on the
11 original sign-up list is Julia Bonsignore. After this,
12 I'm going to turn it over to Chair Danner, who is back
13 online.

14 So, Julia, please.

15 MR. GOTTSCHALL: Sorry to interrupt. This
16 is Mark Gottschall. I don't know if you skipped past
17 me, but I am on the official sign-up.

18 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. I did call
19 your name, and you didn't respond. After Julia, we will
20 come back to you, Mark. Thank you for letting me know.

21 MR. GOTTSCHALL: Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Julia, go ahead.

23 MS. BONSIGNORE: Yes. Thank you very much.
24 My name is Julia Bonsignore. I am a renter in
25 Bellingham, Washington, where things are very expensive

1 and overpriced.

2 My property manager e-mailed us about a
3 proposed large increase to electric and gas. I called
4 UTC yesterday and asked, what is the reason for this?
5 And all she said was that all prices are going up, to
6 which I said, incomes are not. Myself and my partner
7 are on fixed incomes. We can only make so much money.
8 And we are not the only ones.

9 Bellingham, especially, has a very big
10 homelessness problem, and I agree with others who think
11 that this could cause more people to go into
12 homelessness or other people just to live under
13 incredible stress, stress that we do not need.

14 I agree with all the statements made by other
15 people who shared, especially the first woman who spoke,
16 and all the information that everyone else is giving is
17 just more reason for me to agree and feel strongly.
18 Electricity is not a luxury. It is a utility. We do
19 not have a choice. We just need utilities. Thank you
20 very much.

21 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you, Julia.

22 Mark, please go ahead.

23 MR. GOTTSCHALL: Oh, is this my turn? Thank
24 you.

25 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: It is your turn.

1 MR. GOTTSCHALL: Thank you. I submitted a
2 PDF, which I was told was okay, but apparently it's not.
3 So I'm going to speak to what was in the PDF. And so
4 I'll just call out slides that no one can see if I knew
5 where to put it other than with the UTC.

6 So what is at stake here? It's the multiyear
7 rate increases for both gas and electric utilities. The
8 pace of rate increases has not stopped and will increase
9 due to changes in legislation, and the legislation we're
10 talking about is legislation brought about in Washington
11 State.

12 Profits based on we, the ratepayers -- that's
13 the people on this call, for the most part -- are not
14 being invested into other forms of energy even though
15 there are and will be hydroelectric shortfalls in coal
16 plant closures. Profits are being used to lobby the
17 Washington State legislature to benefit the owners of
18 Puget Sound Energy.

19 Now, is there motivation for this investment?
20 Well, there's minimal motivation for Puget Sound Energy
21 to address climate or green-related energy solutions and
22 investments in a foreign country. We, the United
23 States, are a --

24 MR. ROBERTS: Past a minute.

25 MR. GOTTSCHALL: -- foreign country to the

1 owners of Puget Sound Energy. All of the owners do not
2 live in the United States. The United States is a
3 friend nation to the foreign nations of Canada, the
4 Netherlands, and Australia, who are the owners of Puget
5 Sound Energy. These owners combined manage \$1.478
6 trillion -- trillion with a T -- in managed assets.
7 This is the conglomerate, the owners, of Puget Sound
8 Energy.

9 So who's asking for this? Well, Puget Sound
10 Energy is actually owned by Puget Energy, Incorporated,
11 because we can incorporate in the state of Delaware,
12 which is actually owned by Puget Holdings, LLC.

13 Okay. Well, who is Puget Holdings? That is
14 PGGM, otherwise known as PFZW, which is a pension
15 investor from Zeist, Netherlands. There's Alberta
16 Investment Management Corporation from Edmonton,
17 Alberta. There's British Columbia Investment Management
18 Corporation from Victoria, British Columbia. There's
19 OMERS Pension Plan from Toronto, Ontario, actually part
20 of the larger continent of Canada, if you want to call
21 it a continent.

22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Mark?

23 MR. GOTTSCHALL: And there's Macquarie Asset
24 Management, which is from Sydney, Australia.

25 So collectively, they sit atop of \$1.478

1 trillion. So --

2 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Mark, thank you. You
3 are -- I'm sorry. There are many other people waiting
4 to speak. The PowerPoint that you have submitted to us
5 will be available and be made a part of the record,
6 which will be publicly available to everyone.

7 MR. GOTTSCHALL: So I can't complete, then?

8 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: You should wrap up
9 your comments now so other people can speak.

10 MR. GOTTSCHALL: All right. So I will wrap
11 up the comments to the last slide.

12 Basically, I'm opposed to the rate increase.
13 As a business entity, Puget Holdings, LLC is doing
14 exceptionally well, financially speaking. They have
15 pitched forward in their own decks, which you can look
16 at, 10 percent -- roughly 9.9 percent to their
17 investors. They went on the road. They called it the
18 road show to talk about the 9.9 percent investment that
19 you could own.

20 The way they're getting that, the way the
21 pension funds are being funded in Canada, is on our
22 backs. We, the United States ratepayers, who own these
23 resources. They are in our state, and we are being --
24 we are paying to use our own resources thanks to Puget
25 Holdings, LLC.

1 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you, Mark.

2 MR. GOTTSCHALL: So I'm against it. Thank
3 you.

4 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. Lester, I have
5 your name on the list.

6 And, Chair Danner, how about I read off the
7 names on the list, if you are there, and then you can
8 have the folks call in.

9 So the next person -- and this is from the
10 phone call -- is Lynn Fitzhugh. Then after that,
11 Barbara Church, then Iris Antman.

12 So, Lynn, please go ahead if you're on the
13 call.

14 CHAIR DANNER: Thank you. Commissioner
15 Rendahl, just be aware that my connection is very
16 unstable. So --

17 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Would you like me to
18 keep going?

19 CHAIR DANNER: Yeah. I am listening -- I'm
20 sorry. Someone --

21 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I'll keep going.
22 Okay.

23 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Just know I also
24 have a cell phone, and I'm listening in.

25 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Got it. Okay.

1 So Lynn Fitzhugh, then Barbara Church, then
2 Iris Antman.

3 Lynn, are you available? Okay. Lynn Fitzhugh?
4 All right. I'm not hearing Lynn, but if you
5 come back, we'll take you.

6 Barbara Church, then Iris Antman, and then
7 Jordan Van Voast.

8 MS. CHURCH: Thank you. My name is Barbara
9 Church, and I'm a Northeast Tacoma resident just within
10 a two-mile radius of the LNG plant. I'm calling to let
11 you know I stand with the Puyallup Tribe in strongly
12 opposing the Puget Sound Energy's rate hike.

13 What's so upsetting to me is Puget Sound
14 Energy's deceptive marketing. All over my neighborhood
15 digest, it seems daily now that Puget Sound Energy is
16 advertising a green-energy future that will save
17 customers money. Their TV commercials are doing the
18 same thing.

19 Currently, they're asking for the
20 17-to-20-percent rate increase. Most ratepayers don't
21 even know that it's to pay for the 43 percent of the
22 refinery's construction cost. That amounts to \$133
23 million. \$133 million, they want, for the resident
24 ratepayers to absorb that cost. They want our community
25 to pay for a refinery that they didn't support and don't

1 think benefits them.

2 Puget Sound Energy should not be rewarded for
3 the blatant disregard of their customers and the
4 environment. They need to be more accountable for their
5 history of poor community engagement, accountable for
6 their misrepresentation of environmental concerns,
7 accountable for their lack of transparency, and
8 accountable for their continued support for polluting
9 energy sources.

10 Thank you, Commissioners, for all your work in
11 holding Puget Sound Energy accountable and protecting
12 ratepayers and listening to my concerns.

13 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

14 And the next person on the list was Iris
15 Antman.

16 Please go ahead, Iris.

17 MS. ANTMAN: Thank you. I encourage you to
18 deny Puget Sound Energy's proposed rate increase.

19 PSE will use this money to pay for the Tacoma
20 liquefied natural gas facility built on the Puyallup
21 Tribe's tide flats, opposed by the Tribe for years, and
22 which began operations last May, even while facing legal
23 permitting challenges from Earthjustice lawyers
24 representing the Tribe.

25 The pollution from this facility will

1 disproportionately impact already overburdened and
2 marginalized communities like the Tribe as well as
3 immigrants living in the Northwest Detention Center.

4 Liquid natural gas is not a cleaner replacement
5 for maritime fuel, as PSE claims, and agreed upon by
6 both the International Maritime Organization and the
7 World Bank, and continued investment in this energy
8 source will not only worsen the climate crisis, but
9 result in stranded assets as large energy industries are
10 moving towards clean-energy technologies.

11 PSE asserts that public demand for natural gas
12 will increase, but this ignores the reality of growing
13 public demand for electric heat pumps instead of gas
14 heating and both State and local government regulations
15 moving to curtail the use of gas in buildings.

16 The recently passed Inflation Reduction Act
17 will speed up these transitions to clean electric
18 energy. PSE must not be rewarded for sticking with its
19 twentieth-century business model. Please deny their
20 requested rate increase. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you very much.

22 Next is Jordan Van Voast, then Fran Korten,
23 then Shawn Arent.

24 Jordan, are you available?

25 MR. VAN VOAST: Yes. Can you hear me?

1 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Yes, I can.

2 MR. VAN VOAST: Good evening. My name is
3 Jordan Van Voast, and I'm a former PSE ratepayer.

4 Because of my racial and economic privilege, I
5 was able to place 37 solar panels on my roof, install a
6 heat pump and an electric induction cooktop, and
7 subsequently instruct PSE to cut their gas lines at the
8 street in order to minimize the inherent fire danger
9 from gas explosions.

10 As Hurricane Ian is tragically demonstrating
11 right now, we are in a climate emergency. And
12 decision-makers like the members of this Commission are
13 the ones who will determine whether we have a
14 sustainable future --

15 (Interruption in the proceedings.)

16 MR. VAN VOAST: Somebody's got their --

17 CHAIR DANNER: Dave, if you can turn your
18 line mute, that would be -- your computer on mute.
19 Thank you.

20 MR. VAN VOAST: I'll start that sentence
21 over.

22 As Hurricane Ian is demonstrating right now, we
23 are in a climate emergency. And decision-makers like
24 the members of this Commission are the ones who will
25 determine whether we have a sustainable future or allow

1 business-as-usual decision-making to push our world past
2 greenhouse gas tipping points that is already affecting
3 the most vulnerable communities.

4 Rewarding PSE with permission to increase rates
5 sends the wrong message. Huge infrastructure projects
6 like the Tacoma LNG facility are steeped in
7 environmental racism impacting the Puyallup Tribe and
8 disaster capitalism that reward a few people at the top
9 while ultimately penalizing all life for future
10 generations. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

12 I'd like to ask people to please refrain from
13 making personal comments on the comments in the chat.
14 This proceeding and the chat function is simply -- the
15 proceeding is to get your comments on the record. It is
16 being recorded, and we will be putting it in the record.

17 If you could please just use the chat for
18 letting us know you want to speak and any technical
19 issues, that would be greatly appreciated.

20 Fran Korten, please go ahead.

21 MS. KORTEN: Yes. My name is -- can you
22 hear me?

23 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I can hear you.
24 Please go ahead, Fran.

25 MS. KORTEN: My name is Fran Korten, and I

1 live on Bainbridge Island. My energy comes from Puget
2 Sound Energy. I'm a member of the Washington Clean
3 Energy Coalition, where I represent Climate Action
4 Bainbridge.

5 Today, I urge you not to approve PSE's request
6 for a rate increase. PSE has consistently refused to
7 reveal data critical to understanding their models. It
8 is not clear why they need to build a new gas plant
9 right when our State law demands that they get off of
10 fossil fuels.

11 They are proposing various new transmission
12 lines, even though those have been vehemently opposed by
13 the communities they intend to serve, and they are
14 building a liquefied natural gas plant that, as others
15 have mentioned, will mostly export gas out of our state
16 and country.

17 PSE uses these projects to justify their rate
18 increase. PSE should reject these justifications, and
19 they, of course, also want to increase their profit
20 margin. But their behavior in hiding data, being
21 unresponsive to citizen input, and their slow
22 acquisition of renewable energy sources should not be
23 rewarded. In fact, the UTC should reduce their profit
24 margin in recognition of their poor performance.

25 Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

1 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

2 So next is Sean Arent, and then Neal Anderson,
3 and then Don Marsh.

4 So, Sean Arent, if you're on the line, please
5 go ahead.

6 MR. ARENT: Good evening, folks. Let me
7 just say what we're all feeling.

8 Private, for-profit utilities shouldn't exist.
9 Our little power in electricity belongs in the hands of
10 the people. People are here to make their voices heard,
11 but this Commission is not required to listen. The best
12 way to require that is through democratization.

13 You, the ratepayers, have the power to stop
14 this. If this increase goes through, I want to implore
15 you all to organize. You literally pay PSE's bills, and
16 all together, you don't have to do that. I think
17 something like a ratepayers' union could be created, and
18 people could take the power back, literally.

19 I think this Commission probably doesn't want
20 that to happen. I think it's worth creating a credible
21 threat. I think at least two of you had pretty good
22 consumer protection backgrounds. I'm not so sure about
23 the Verizon guy. But I think you all will make the
24 right decision here, and I hope you do so. Thanks.

25 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

1 Neal Anderson, are you available?

2 MR. ANDERSON: Yes. And I'm here as a PSE
3 ratepayer.

4 And I understand that building the clean-energy
5 future will take money and that rates may go up as a
6 result, but that's not what PSE is building. Instead,
7 they're doubling down on more fossil fuels. They want
8 us to pay for their LNG tank, and in their 20-year plan,
9 they're still talking about new gas power plants.

10 The International Energy Agency has said that
11 the only way to stay below 1.5 degrees is for all
12 spending on new fossil fuel projects to stop
13 immediately. And on the day when we're seeing a
14 record-setting storm surge in Florida with countless
15 homes being destroyed as we speak, do we really want to
16 wait and see how much worse 1.5 degrees will be before
17 starting to act?

18 PSE is helping push us over the edge of this
19 climate crisis, and they're here tonight asking us to
20 pay for it. I ask that you reject this request and tell
21 them to come back with a plan that describes how they're
22 going to transition away from fossil fuels. Then they
23 can ask for a rate increase. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

25 Next is Don Marsh, and then after that is Jim

1 Bernthal, Rob Briggs, and Stacy Oaks.

2 So go ahead, Don Marsh.

3 MR. MARSH: Hi. I'm Don Marsh. I lead the
4 Washington Clean Energy Coalition. Our members are
5 volunteers with many years of participation in PSE's
6 integrated resource plan advisory groups and previous
7 hearings of this Commission.

8 We submitted a written comment on PSE's general
9 rate case signed by 38 organizations, and the letter was
10 also endorsed by 450 individual ratepayers residing in
11 most of the cities and towns PSE serves.

12 We strongly object to the size of PSE's
13 proposed rate increases. Contrary to PSE's public
14 claims, these increases are not focused on cleaner
15 energy or significantly improving the reliability of our
16 service. Instead, PSE seeks compensation for expensive
17 and damaging projects of questionable benefit to
18 customers.

19 We cite three examples in our letter: The
20 Tacoma LNG plant, the Energize Eastside transmission
21 upgrade, and the Lake Hills transmission line. Each of
22 these projects was vehemently opposed by PSE customers,
23 not just because they were damaging to our communities
24 and the environment, but also because they had no
25 obvious benefit for PSE ratepayers who must pay higher

1 energy bills for decades to cover principal and interest
2 payments.

3 Now these projects and others have been built,
4 and PSE wants us pay for them. We feel we must
5 communicate with PSE in the only language the company
6 respects: Dollars and cents.

7 If the Commission finds PSE's projects prudent
8 and allows full recovery of the company's costs, plus a
9 generous 10 percent return on investment, nothing will
10 change. PSE will continue to pursue projects that pump
11 up its revenues and boost its bottom line, regardless of
12 the costs to ratepayers.

13 Please represent our interests and let PSE
14 know, in no uncertain terms, that the company must
15 consider the goals and aspirations of current ratepayers
16 and all those who come after. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

18 Jim Bernthal?

19 MR. BERNTHAL: Yes. Hi. I am a PSE
20 customer in Seattle. Fortunately, I don't have to buy
21 your electricity, PSE. I'm sorry. I'm speaking with
22 the UTC. I understand that.

23 But I am very, very strongly opposed to this
24 rate increase for a number of reasons, and the biggest
25 of which is -- the indications I have is that PSE

1 continues to refuse to look for clean-energy
2 alternatives and instead is taking the ratepayers' money
3 to, as people have pointed out before, finance very
4 destructive projects like the LNG plant in Tacoma. So
5 the basic bottom line is I strongly oppose this rate
6 increase.

7 I also want to put into the record that the
8 testimonies given verbatim by five people already -- and
9 I know there are more to come -- are also exactly my
10 testimony. Those people are Rebecca -- who was the
11 first person to speak -- Rebecca -- I don't remember her
12 last name -- from Washington Environmental Council,
13 Barbara Church, Iris Antman, Fran Korten, and Neal
14 Anderson, all of which addressed points that are
15 incredibly much in line with my thoughts on this matter.
16 So please take their record as part -- my record as
17 being exactly the same as theirs.

18 And thank you for the chance to take this
19 input. UTC, please stand up and do what it takes to
20 democratize these utilities. They're a terrible threat
21 to our planet's future. Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

23 So next is Rob Briggs. After Rob is Stacy
24 Oaks, and after Stacy is Todd Lagestee.

25 Rob, go ahead.

1 MR. BRIGGS: Good evening. I'm Rob Briggs,
2 a Vashon resident. I'd like to speak to the question of
3 whether Tacoma LNG belongs in the rate base.

4 Tacoma LNG was not the least reasonable cost
5 solution to meeting gas demand. The least reasonable
6 cost solution was to stop promoting gas and to suspend
7 new gas hookups, thereby ensuring adequate capacity.
8 It's a no-cost solution that obviates any gas grid
9 rationale for Tacoma LNG in the rate base.

10 Building Tacoma LNG without first obtaining the
11 necessary permits was not prudent. Building Tacoma LNG
12 without first resolving treaty rights of Native
13 Americans was not prudent. Building that
14 1.7-million-gallon LNG tank containing the energy
15 equivalent of 11 Hiroshima-sized bombs in a populated
16 area, which could ignite due to earthquakes or malice,
17 was not prudent.

18 Please don't force ratepayers to pay for PSE's
19 mistake. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

21 Stacy Oaks, please go ahead.

22 MS. OAKS: Yes. Thank you. My name is
23 Stacy Oaks, and I oppose all the requested rate
24 increases by Puget Sound Energy. I stand with the
25 Puyallup Tribe in strongly opposing the Tacoma LNG

1 facility, which is still in court proceedings and might
2 never provide any benefit to residential customers.

3 People are barely getting by right now, and I
4 think that's obvious to everyone. This increase could
5 mean having to pick between having heat during the
6 winter or not having another necessity like food or
7 medicine.

8 We know that PSE doesn't need this money.
9 Let's just take a moment to think about what PSE spends
10 their money on. Puget Sound Energy spends more on
11 lobbying and campaign contributions than Amazon and
12 Google. So it is not an insignificant amount.

13 Another thing that they like to spend their
14 money on is squashing local attempts to create public
15 power, as been talked about. So when Thurston County
16 tried to create a PUD instead of Puget Sound Energy, it
17 became the most expensive election in that county's
18 history because of all of the money that Puget Sound
19 Energy dumped in to defeat that.

20 They also spend a lot of money on PR campaigns.
21 I know that Barbara Church mentioned earlier about all
22 of the fancy ads about how they're doing this renewable
23 energy, even though we know, based on what they're
24 asking for here, that's not actually what they invest
25 in.

1 MR. ROBERTS: We're over a minute.

2 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: If you can try to
3 wrap up, that would be great, Stacy.

4 MS. OAKS: Sounds good.

5 A few of those other things that they're
6 invested in is advertising at children to make them
7 interested in fracked gas and also in advertising to get
8 social media influencers to gush over gas stoves while
9 they know full well that children in homes with gas
10 stoves are 42 percent more likely to have asthma, and
11 they keep doing it anyway.

12 So basically, people are here, and I know that
13 people are frustrated, and that's probably really hard
14 for you guys as Commissioners to hear. But basically,
15 we're here with one minute to beg you, the only people
16 that can protect us from this monopoly, to protect us,
17 to save us from this.

18 So, you know, I really hope that you guys do
19 the right thing and deny these rate increases. Puget
20 Sound Energy clearly doesn't need any more money. Thank
21 you.

22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you very much.

23 Todd Lagestee?

24 MR. LAGESTEE: Hi. Can you hear me?

25 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I can hear you.

1 Please go ahead.

2 MR. LAGESTEE: Thank you. My name is Todd
3 Lagestee. I'm here as a private citizen. I'm
4 unequivocally opposed to any rate increase for Puget
5 Sound Energy.

6 Currently, PSE has an authorized 9.4 percent
7 return on equity. That is too high for a monopolistic
8 enterprise authorized by the government. Inflation is
9 hurting regular people, and PSE can and should accept a
10 lower rate of return in order to help regular people,
11 and the UTC should make that happen.

12 PSE has made guaranteed profits for years and
13 now wants to externalize the costs of the Clean Energy
14 Transformation Act onto ratepayers. This should also be
15 opposed by the UTC.

16 If for some reason the UTC can't agree with the
17 previous reasons for opposing the PSE rate increase,
18 then I hope you will consider the Washington State
19 Attorney General's well-researched and well-stated
20 position opposing the PSE rate increases.

21 I was a nuclear operator on submarines in the
22 Navy. I know a little bit about power generation. I've
23 also been a professional union firefighter for over 20
24 years. I go into people's houses, and I see them
25 struggle now.

1 Now is not the time for a monopoly to increase
2 its return on equity. I hope the UTC will deny this
3 rate increase and give PSE a cut in profits just like
4 many of us regular people are having to deal with in
5 this difficult inflationary environment.

6 And then the last thing I'd just like to point
7 out is that Jefferson County did municipalize their
8 electricity supply and distribution away from PSE, and
9 they voted on it in 2008. They authorized it in 2010,
10 and now their rates are about equivalent to what PSE is.
11 Their base rate is three times higher, but their per
12 kilowatt-hour is less, and so that basically makes it
13 even.

14 And so I hope everybody here is listening and
15 they are considering, and the UTC, I hope, will listen
16 and say, how can we assist our citizens in this state in
17 going away from monopolistic for-profit entities
18 providing utilities? Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

20 Next is Oneida Arnold, then Rich Voget, and
21 then Krys Brown.

22 Oneida, are you available?

23 MS. ARNOLD: I am. My name is Oneida
24 Arnold.

25 Ratepayers versus shareholders. I'm deeply

1 concerned about the use of a liquefied natural gas
2 facility in the tide flats. This highly polluting and
3 risky facility is located less than a mile from homes,
4 churches, daycare facilities, and schools, one of which
5 I retired from, McCarver Elementary on Hilltop.

6 We are living in unprecedented times of rapidly
7 changing climate brought on by the continued and
8 increased use of fossil fuels, of which LNG is one.
9 There is general scientific policy consensus that the
10 greenhouse gases emitted by LNG compromise State and
11 agency climate goals and impede the transition to a
12 low-carbon economy.

13 During its environmental review process, Puget
14 Sound Energy indicated that only one or two percent of
15 the total production at the facility would be used to
16 benefit ratepayers. Why now are they asking for
17 ratepayers for 43 percent of the cost to build that
18 facility?

19 This is an ill-conceived, expensive, and
20 harmful project that harms vulnerable communities living
21 near the Port. I stand with the Puyallup Tribe in
22 opposition to PSE's rate increase and indeed the entire
23 LNG debacle itself. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

25 Rich Voget, you are next. After you is Kryz

1 Brown, and after you is Mary Kern.

2 Rich, please go ahead.

3 MR. VOGET: Rich Voget, and I care about
4 fairness.

5 In 2019, our State legislature passed the 100
6 Percent Clean Electricity Bill requiring utilities to
7 stop generating any electricity from fossil fuels by
8 2045. At that time, PSE generated almost 60 percent of
9 its electricity from coal and natural gas. It is fair
10 to only allow incremental rate increases to pay for
11 infrastructure as PSE incrementally converts to
12 electricity.

13 We seem to be at a tipping point in our
14 democracy. Puget Sound Energy started building the LNG
15 facility in Tacoma without building permits. Their
16 attitude was, we're so big and powerful, we don't need
17 no stinkin' permits. Is that the society we want to
18 become, where the rich and powerful can do anything they
19 want? Where is the fairness in that? To be a nation of
20 laws, there have to be consequences for breaking laws.

21 I urge you to impose consequences by denying a
22 rate increase for recovering the building expenses of
23 the LNG facility. It is not fair to grant a rate
24 increase to provide more return on the shareholders'
25 investment. It is not fair to grant a rate increase to

1 bump up the CEO's pay package. And it certainly is not
2 fair that ratepayers should pay for this expensive and
3 poorly-conceived project that speeds global warming and
4 disproportionately harms highly-impacted and vulnerable
5 communities that live near the Port of Tacoma. Thank
6 you.

7 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

8 Next is Krys Brown. After you is Mary Kern,
9 and then Orion Canning.

10 Go ahead, Krys Brown.

11 MS. BROWN: Thank you. I want to say that I
12 stand in solidarity with the Puyallup Nation in their
13 opposition to the LNG facility, and I stand in
14 solidarity with everyone that has spoken against this
15 rate increase.

16 I can't speak to everything they have spoken to
17 in one minute. What I can say is that I'm a recent
18 committee officer for the Thurston County Democrats,
19 PCO-207.

20 I represent my direct community. I live in a
21 low-income, income-restricted property that is primarily
22 housing low-income people, people on Disability, people
23 on fixed incomes. I represent, in my complex alone, 160
24 voices. So I want you to understand that I am not one
25 person. I am speaking for over 200 homes in my

1 neighborhood.

2 And rate increases directly affect everyone.
3 Many of the elderly and disabled people in my complex
4 lose their power and have their power shut off every
5 winter because of the mandatory increases when we need
6 heating. This is disgusting. It's despicable.

7 And I want to thank Shawn for putting that
8 interest form out there because we need to come up with
9 better solutions. I have learned so much in this
10 past -- I don't know -- hour and a half that I've been
11 on this call, things that I didn't know and am
12 absolutely terrified and disgusted by PSE's practices.

13 I just came on here to say, you know, hey,
14 we're poor, and these things mostly just affect poor
15 people disproportionately. You know, you aren't going
16 to see a lot of people here who can afford their bill
17 every month complaining.

18 But it is a monopoly, and we need to talk about
19 monopolies because those aren't supposed to be kind of
20 permissible in a democracy, and yet here we are with a
21 monopoly on power. We had these ten or something years
22 of --

23 MR. ROBERTS: Over a minute.

24 MS. BROWN: Okay. I'm wrapping up.

25 -- get solar on your roof. Get solar on your

1 roof. But even getting solar on your roof or on your
2 property or building a whole solar field on your land --
3 you are still forced to be on the grid and feed back
4 into the grid, and all you're giving yourself is a
5 discount on their monopoly. And that is not fair.

6 So please listen to the fact that I am 200
7 families, 200 homes, saying no to an increase in the
8 rates for everyone. Not just my county, not just Pierce
9 County, everyone. No one deserves to foot their bill.

10 Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

12 Next is Mary Kern, then Orion Canning, and then
13 Esther Day.

14 So, Mary Kern, please go ahead.

15 MS. KERN: Thank you. I was on the list, so
16 I've already spoken. So thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you for
18 reminding me.

19 Orion Canning, are you available?

20 MR. CANNING: Yeah. I just want to say that
21 I oppose the rate increase. I stand with the Puyallup
22 Tribe opposing the LNG facility, and I want to say thank
23 you to the people who spoke before me.

24 I want to talk a little bit about the history
25 of the regulations that are leading -- that are

1 incentivizing the building of this facility. There's
2 this regulatory compact that says that utility companies
3 have to provide energy to everyone at the lowest
4 possible cost, but there's this loophole that if they
5 build a facility, they can pass that cost on to the
6 people who are paying for those services.

7 So that's why they're building this. It's a
8 nationwide problem. And we should change those
9 regulations. So instead of incentivizing just building
10 new facilities that don't actually help anybody, we
11 should be incentivizing, well, maintenance for one
12 thing.

13 Just a couple years ago in Seattle, there
14 was -- or this was in February 2021. There was an
15 explosion, an underground explosion, because PSE didn't
16 replace an old gas pipeline. These things are happening
17 all over the country because our regulations don't
18 incentivize maintenance, and that's a big thing. It
19 should also be incentivizing clean energy, of course,
20 especially with climate change happening.

21 MR. ROBERTS: We're over a minute.

22 MR. CANNING: So, yeah. I think it should
23 be a publicly-owned utility, really, but since we can't
24 have that, we should be regulating them in a way that
25 actually serves the people and the communities that

1 they're supposed to be serving instead of just
2 exploiting them for profit. Thanks.

3 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

4 Esther Day, then Michelle Blackmon, and then
5 Jennifer Keller.

6 Esther Day, are you available?

7 MS. DAY: Yes, I am. Can you hear me?

8 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Yes, I can.

9 MS. DAY: Thank you, Ann, and thank you,
10 everybody, for standing up for -- against the
11 ratepayers' -- the increase in rates.

12 I'm a ratepayer in Tacoma, and I am really -- I
13 stand with the Puyallup Tribe, and I support what the
14 Attorney General and the Washington Clean Energy folks
15 are saying.

16 I also want to say, this looks a lot like
17 Enron. I mean, my family suffered because of Enron and
18 all the crap that they were doing. Excuse my French.
19 But my problem is also that that facility is on a river
20 port. And on top of that, it is so dangerous to have it
21 there.

22 Go to the Internet and look for the explosion
23 that occurred in Beirut on the waterfront. It exploded
24 so badly, it was like a nuclear bomb going off. We
25 should never, ever place anything like this on our tide

1 flats. Because why? It is not built for that, and it
2 is a river port. It is not a deep sea port.

3 I thank you very much. I am against this rate
4 increase, and I stand united with everyone. Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

6 Next is Michelle Blackmon, then Jennifer
7 Keller, then Pedro Valverde.

8 Go ahead, Michelle Blackmon.

9 MS. BLACKMON: Thank you. I am a ratepayer
10 in Renton, Washington. And I'm here just as a private
11 citizen, but I agree with what everyone has been saying.
12 I am not familiar with all of the logistics that have
13 been going on with Puget Sound Energy, and I am so
14 thankful to be on this call to hear a lot of information
15 that I didn't previously know.

16 But just from my own personal experience, I
17 have found Puget Sound Energy to be very discounting of
18 issues that I have had with my electricity, and they
19 have not wanted to deal with me and to act in what I
20 perceive to be a good manner in helping resolve my
21 issues, and trying to blame it on me and saying that it
22 was issues in my house, and I hired an electrician to
23 come and look and see what was going on, and provided
24 very specific information to me that it was not my
25 problem. It was Puget Sound Energy's problem, but they

1 don't want to deal with it because my lines are
2 underground.

3 I find this really pretty disgusting that they
4 are not willing to do what needs to be done. And so
5 now, hearing all the information of everything else that
6 they are involved in, I understand.

7 So I am deeply opposed to this rate increase as
8 a senior citizen. That is not something that I can
9 afford, and many people in my neighborhood are seniors
10 and cannot afford something like that. I was just
11 appalled when I received the notification as to how much
12 they were planning to increase it.

13 And now understanding -- and I will be
14 investigating it further -- the reason and rationale
15 behind their decision and their ask, I am just totally
16 appalled by all of this and would really sincerely
17 request that the UTC deny Puget Sound Energy this
18 increase. That's all I have to say. Thank you very
19 much.

20 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you, Michelle.
21 And I will ask you, if you don't mind, the staff -- the
22 consumer protection staff of the UTC is available to
23 work with you if you have continuing issues with PSE
24 with your service. That is something we can do. And I
25 can have one of our staff reach out to you just directly

1 by chat so they can give you the information. So thank
2 you.

3 MS. BLACKMON: Okay. I was forwarded to a
4 supervisor, who then kept putting me off and putting me
5 off, and so --

6 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: So then you come to
7 the UTC, and our staff can help you.

8 MS. BLACKMON: Okay.

9 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: So they will reach
10 out to you.

11 MS. BLACKMON: Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you for your
13 comments.

14 Next is Jennifer Keller, then Pedro Valverde,
15 and then Desiree Douglass.

16 Jennifer Keller, are you available?

17 MS. KELLER: Yes. Can you hear me?

18 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I can. Thank you.

19 MS. KELLER: Yeah. Thank you for the
20 opportunity to comment. Thank you for your work as
21 Commissioners. I live in Bellevue, and I am a PSE
22 ratepayer. I want to talk about the Tacoma LNG facility
23 and Energize Eastside.

24 Please deny PSE's request to pass along to
25 ratepayers the cost of these projects. These projects

1 are unnecessary, damaging, expensive, poorly-conceived,
2 and they don't benefit ratepayers. PSE has gone ahead
3 with them even without all the necessary permits or
4 public process and has assumed they can push the
5 projects through and then force ratepayers to pay for
6 them. This is unacceptable.

7 For brevity, I completely support comments from
8 quite a few people, including Rebecca Ponzio, Fran
9 Korten, Neal Anderson, Don Marsh, Stacy Oaks, and Rich
10 Voget, and others. Please consider me to have made the
11 same comments as they did.

12 For the Tacoma LNG facility, PSE has never
13 proven the need. The facility provides almost no
14 benefit to ratepayers, to saying to -- providing LNG to
15 marine vessels, not ratepayers. That's unfair to charge
16 ratepayers for that.

17 The project goes against our state commitments
18 to address environmental justice. It disproportionately
19 harms the surrounding communities, the Puyallup Tribe,
20 and people in the Port and tide flats area. Why should
21 ratepayers be forced to pay for breaking our commitments
22 to environmental justice? The project goes against
23 Washington State efforts to reduce carbon emissions.
24 It's wrong to require ratepayers to finance actions that
25 will destroy the future of young people alive today.

1 For Energize Eastside, PSE has never proven the
2 need. Electrical demand on the Eastside isn't strong
3 enough. PSE talks about growth out on the Eastside and
4 then says things about having to keep up, but
5 electricity demand data shows this is false. The demand
6 has been growing very slowly, and thank you for telling
7 PSE they can't repeatedly inflate projections in IRPs
8 and then adjust them downward after the fact.

9 We have time to look at our many options for
10 dealing with this slow growth in demand. Ratepayers
11 should not be forced to pay for pushing through with
12 Energize Eastside.

13 PSE has also never proven the need for this
14 approach to addressing electric demand. PSE prepared an
15 EIS and made a big show of inviting comment on such
16 things as alternatives. Commenters like me told PSE
17 that the studies they conducted on alternatives were
18 poor. They put effective, less expensive, less
19 destructive alternatives in a bad light. PSE
20 essentially shrugged and put our comments in an
21 appendix.

22 It is unfair to force ratepayers to pay for
23 this project when far better alternatives are available
24 more so every month. Solar power, demand response,
25 battery storage, lots of things.

1 So I urge you to deny prudence of the Tacoma
2 LNG and Energize Eastside projects. Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

4 Okay. Next is Pedro Valverde, then Desiree
5 Douglass, then Richie Ohlson.

6 Pedro, are you available? Pedro Valverde, are
7 you still on the line?

8 Desiree Douglass, are you available?

9 MS. DOUGLASS: Yes, I am.

10 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead.

11 MS. DOUGLASS: Okay. Good evening,
12 everyone. It's good to see and hear everyone tonight,
13 really. My name is Desiree Douglass. I first got
14 involved in the fight against PSE's fracking LNG in
15 2016.

16 PSE was building their refinery without
17 permits. And in my profession, I work with permitting,
18 and I was outraged that such a massive international
19 corporation could get away with failing to do the
20 required consultation with a sovereign nation, the
21 Puyallup Tribe, and could get away with building such a
22 massive fracked gas refinery without permits, and simply
23 then pay the fine and move on.

24 And that's exactly what they did with the Puget
25 Sound Clean Air Agency. They built, they paid their

1 fine, they moved on. Now it's built. And now they're
2 back.

3 (Interruption in the proceedings.)

4 MS. DOUGLASS: Now they want everyone to pay
5 for it.

6 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: If you are not
7 speaking, please put yourself on mute. Thank you.

8 MS. DOUGLASS: I'm speaking. Is that okay?

9 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Yes. Please go
10 ahead.

11 MS. DOUGLASS: Yeah. So PSE -- you know,
12 they didn't quit. Now they want everyone to pay for it
13 because, as these years have passed, everything that was
14 said in all the public hearings over all those years --
15 everything the Tribe said is coming true.

16 It's a dangerous, dangerous thing to put on an
17 old Superfund site. It's an abomination to put on a
18 water body such as the Puyallup estuary. And it's
19 existential danger. It's a true danger to the people
20 living around it, right? It's compressed by coldness,
21 fracked gas. And we have seen in the news enough of
22 those explosions.

23 So PSE may well be left with a stranded asset,
24 and they don't want that. So what do people do --
25 companies do when they want out quick? They don't want

1 to have to pay for that certain asset? They get the
2 money up front. And I honestly think that's what's
3 happening here. You know, I don't go looking for
4 trouble, but if you watch something long enough, you
5 start to see how it develops.

6 So here's the thing. I'm really happy to hear
7 ratepayers here.

8 MR. ROBERTS: We're over a minute.

9 MS. DOUGLASS: Okay. You want to give me 30
10 seconds more?

11 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please just wrap up.

12 MS. DOUGLASS: Okay. So the Puyallup Tribe
13 has fought this refinery from the beginning of the
14 project, and they're still fighting it in court. And
15 the Puyallup Tribe has what's known as treaty rights.
16 In our Constitution, it says that is the supreme law of
17 the land because that was the treaty made so that
18 nonindigenous people could settle here without a war.

19 So it's a constitutional thing. It's very
20 powerful. And I support the Tribe -- I think many of us
21 here do -- in finishing that fight because it's going to
22 go into higher and higher courts before it wins, right?

23 We do not -- we must not allow PSE to pass
24 their expenses for this God-awful project onto the
25 ratepayers, onto the most vulnerable, the people with

1 limited incomes, you know, and make victims of everyone.
2 I say we stand together and say no, and I ask the UTC to
3 stand with us and say no to PSE's request for a rate
4 increase.

5 Finally, every agency in the State of
6 Washington, including the Commission, has the authority
7 vested to them from the State and the federal
8 government, and with that authority comes what's called
9 a trust responsibility: The responsibility to hold up
10 the treaty rights of the sovereign nations of our
11 lands -- of their lands, actually.

12 And I ask the UTC to do that because that is a
13 powerful authority. It's in the Constitution. And I
14 know you let me go way over my minute. Thank you very
15 much. It's really good to see and hear all of you
16 tonight. And Puyallup Tribe hasn't quit, and neither
17 will we.

18 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you for your
19 comments.

20 MS. DOUGLASS: Good night.

21 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Next is Richie
22 Ohlson, then Peggy Printz, and then Kyle Lucas.

23 Richie Ohlson, are you available?

24 MR. OHLSON: Hi. Yeah.

25 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead.

1 MR. OHLSON: Well, I didn't know I would get
2 the chance to speak, but I am opposed to the rate
3 changes, the rate increases, and it would
4 disproportionately affect marginalized people and people
5 with low income and just people who can't generally
6 afford, like -- you know, they're struggling to get
7 their basic needs met every single day, and this is just
8 another thing pressing them down. And, you know, like,
9 you're not allowed to survive here.

10 It's just generally a completely unfair and
11 dehumanizing thing. It's just horrible. Like, I don't
12 know why you continue to oppress people like this, like
13 PSE would. I'm just -- I would not like these rate
14 changes to go forward. And that's about all I have to
15 say.

16 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you for your
17 comments.

18 Next is Peggy Printz, and then Kyle Lucas, and
19 then Patrick McKee.

20 Peggy Printz, are you on the line?

21 MS. PRINTZ: Yes, I am. Hello.

22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead.

23 MS. PRINTZ: Hello. I'm speaking on behalf
24 of Seattle Cruise Control. We are a grassroots
25 organization.

1 Please do not grant PSE the rate increase to
2 pay for this Tacoma LNG facility. We're alarmed about
3 the potential dangers of storing and using LNG. Then
4 there are the greenhouse gas implications.

5 The most up-to-date research concludes that LNG
6 is not a climate solution for the shipping industry.
7 Depending on the type of engine, LNG can create 70 to 80
8 percent more life-cycle greenhouse gases than marine gas
9 oil.

10 We must also consider the environmental justice
11 aspects of the LNG plant. Toxic extraction sites and
12 refineries are often placed in black, brown, indigenous,
13 low-income, and already overburdened communities. And
14 the Tacoma LNG is a prime example of this unjust
15 placement.

16 PSE is trying to extract money from tax
17 ratepayers for this facility before the Puyallup Tribe's
18 appeal of the permits has even been heard in court.
19 Therefore, our members oppose all of the required
20 requested rate increases for Puget Sound Energy. Thank
21 you very much.

22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

23 Next is Kyle Lucas, Patrick McKee, and Tony
24 Ivey.

25 Kyle Lucas, are you available?

1 MS. LUCAS: Yes, I am. Can you hear me?

2 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I can. Please go
3 ahead.

4 MS. LUCAS: Well, thank you. Good evening,
5 and "teigicid." Thank you in our Coast Salish
6 Lushootseed languages for the opportunity to comment
7 this evening.

8 As a residential PSE customer, I strongly
9 oppose its requested rate increases that subsidize its
10 risky, polluting, and dangerous LNG project. It is
11 unconscionable to force we ratepayers to pay for PSE's
12 gamble on behalf of marine shipping that doesn't even
13 benefit us.

14 The UTC must consider disproportionate impacts
15 to marginalized communities in its decision-making, and
16 the LNG facility will disproportionately impact already
17 burdened and marginalized communities, including the
18 Puyallup Tribe and immigrants at the Northwest Detention
19 Center.

20 The Puyallup Tribe and Earthjustice have active
21 court appeals pending on the risky LNG refinery for
22 which PSE began construction two years prior to
23 obtaining permits.

24 Industry, State, and local governments are
25 moving away from gas. That's the reality. Worldwide

1 weather events affirm that we're in a global climate
2 emergency, yet most of two million PSE customers in
3 Washington have no other choice of utility and should
4 not have to support a foreknown entity seeking
5 compensation for its fossil fuels and maritime gambles.

6 I ask you to protect utility customers from
7 predatory schemes as represented in the LNG project and
8 associated costs. Please deny the PSE's proposed rate
9 increases. Thank you. "Teigicid."

10 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

11 Next is Patrick McKee, then Tony Ivey, and then
12 Lorelei Voda.

13 Patrick McKee, are you available?

14 MR. MCKEE: Yes, I am.

15 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you. Please go
16 ahead.

17 MR. MCKEE: Yeah. This is all pretty
18 shameful. PSE is the dirtiest utility in the state.
19 They jumped ahead of the permitting process and
20 overruled the express will of the Puyallup people to put
21 an environmentally catastrophic LNG facility intended
22 for commercial sale of fracked gas, not for powering
23 Washington homes, on unceded tide flat land in Tacoma,
24 and now insists on massively increasing rates to pay out
25 their shareholders.

1 They're still pending legislation on the
2 legality of the whole Tacoma LNG operation. The
3 Attorney General's Office is opposed to the increase,
4 for God's sake. The Washington Health Disparities Map
5 makes it very clear that near Port Tacoma, residents are
6 already paying with their lives and their health for our
7 collective inability to move past fossil fuel, and now
8 here comes this investor-owned utility saying, just give
9 us a little more.

10 Let's say no to PSE shareholder-driven rate
11 increases, and then let's replace them with public
12 utility districts, and the UTC can help with that.
13 Thank you very much.

14 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

15 Tony Ivey, then Lorelei Voda, then Claire
16 Richards.

17 Tony Ivey, are you available?

18 MR. IVEY: I'm right here. Thank you. My
19 name is Tony Ivey. I'm a civic engagement manager for
20 Washington Environmental Council, but more importantly,
21 I'm a Tacoma resident where the LNG plant is located.

22 Firstly, good evening. I want to thank the UTC
23 Commissioners for deliberating this very important issue
24 with public comment. Turnout may have surprised some of
25 you, but it's no surprise to the Tacoma residents who

1 have lived with this and have been very vocal about
2 fracked gas in their backyards for many years to every
3 council, commission, agency, and board who would listen.

4 I want to bring attention to a couple things.
5 Number one, the greed and inequity that is present here.
6 PSE itself has shown that during their environmental
7 review that only one to two percent of the total gas
8 produced in this facility will be used to benefit
9 ratepayers, yet they want to charge ratepayers like me
10 43 percent of the cost to build this facility.

11 The facility, mind you, did not have their
12 correct permits to be built, and even still have failed
13 to secure contracts with shipping companies looking to
14 transition to LNG -- to fracked gas.

15 Allowing PSE to recover these costs for their
16 facility is not only going to hurt ratepayers, it's
17 encouraging companies to promote continued growth of the
18 use and sale of dirty, fracked gas by marine vessel
19 customers and for transportation. Doing so exacerbates
20 the climate harms and contributes to this climate
21 catastrophe we are currently in.

22 I strongly urge you to make sure that we are
23 not making ratepayers pay for this expensive,
24 poorly-conceived project that harms the people who are
25 forced to pay for it. This is adding insult to injury

1 to further inequity. Stand with the Puyallup Tribe,
2 Commissioners, and please deny prudence of the Tacoma
3 LNG project. Deny these rate hikes. Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you for your
5 comments.

6 Lorelei Voda, then Claire Richards, then Lester
7 Pogue.

8 Lorelei Voda, are you available.

9 MS. VODA: Hi. Yes, I am. This is Lorelei.
10 I am really grateful for this hearing tonight. I had no
11 idea about a lot of what's going on.

12 I was simply going to call as a single senior
13 citizen who is very energy-careful, and yet my bill is
14 now up to \$160 a month. And I'm looking at this,
15 telling me that they're going to ask for a 15.80 percent
16 increase in one year, and then continue that. And I'm
17 quite sure that my Social Security is not going to go up
18 15.80 percent next year to cover this.

19 So if by any chance any of this is approved, I
20 think that's a very unreasonable amount to ask for the
21 first year, and they should definitely come down. But
22 listening to the other folks, it's sounding like,
23 really, it's not necessary or a benefit to us as
24 ratepayers. Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

1 Claire Richards, then Lester Pogue, and then
2 Amy Faith.

3 Claire, are you available?

4 MS. RICHARDS: Yes. Thank you for having us
5 and taking our comment. I live on Bainbridge Island,
6 and I am a customer of Puget Sound Energy, and I'm also
7 a member of the Washington Physicians for Social
8 Responsibility.

9 I agree with previous comments that rate
10 increases, especially electricity increases, have a
11 disproportionate impact on customers that are trying to
12 stay cool during heat waves, which we know are on the
13 rise because of climate change.

14 And according to data from the Energy
15 Information Administration, Puget Sound Energy
16 electricity costs in 2020 were about \$2.50 more per
17 kilowatt-hour than Pacific Power and almost \$1 per
18 kilowatt more than Avista, the other two investor-owned
19 utilities.

20 They also have the second highest SAIDI values
21 or sustained average interruption duration index in the
22 state, and that's with the major events and obviously
23 depends on which reliability metric you take. But
24 generally, they tend to be the highest -- on the higher
25 end of all other reliability entities, which means that,

1 on average, their customers have a higher burden of
2 power outages, and they perform poorly in terms of their
3 reliability.

4 But, also, they are continuing to create
5 stranded assets like the LNG plant in Tacoma, which I
6 vigorously opposed and protested. And the irony of this
7 is that them spending our money in creating more fossil
8 fuel projects means that climate change gets worse,
9 resulting in more power outages that have already been
10 increasing because of climate change.

11 And, also, I pay every month to offset my
12 electricity for solar, but how is it fair that I should
13 also pay PSE to continue to expand fossil fuels at the
14 same time that I am trying to use clean energy to have a
15 safer climate for my child and the next generation? So
16 thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

18 Lester Pogue, then Amy Faith, then Tara
19 Villalba.

20 Lester, are you available?

21 MR. POGUE: Yes, I am. Thank you. My name
22 is Lester Clarence Pogue, Junior, and I'm a resident of
23 the Hilltop neighborhood of the city of Tacoma.

24 And I demand that the UTC deny the ability of
25 Puget Sound Energy to increase the rates of their

1 customers' energy consumption in order to pay for their
2 irresponsible promises to provide LNG to the maritime
3 industry, foreign investors, and ratepayers through its
4 development of their processing and production facility
5 down on Puyallup ancestral territory in the white
6 supremacist, colonized Port of Tacoma.

7 I second the commenters that have demanded and
8 provided plenty of information for the UTC Commissioners
9 to go on, and please don't continue to support the white
10 supremacist values of this capitalist system that are
11 devastating folks' lives right now. We do not need this
12 right now.

13 And, please, if you're in your white savior
14 complex, please do not continue. PSE, AAs, all the
15 other industries that are supposed to be helping the
16 folks here? Do not do that. Weigh on your heart, and
17 do the right thing. This is ridiculous.

18 This PSE LNG facility down on the Port, they
19 just had a fire on the deck of one of the maritime ships
20 that has an 827,000-gallon freakin' tank on it right
21 next to the LNG facility, which is right next to US Oil.
22 Come on. You all got to do better.

23 Stop the white supremacist, capitalist
24 investment of all this crap, and respect indigenous
25 sovereignty and intergovernmental relationships. Please

1 do better and try to make up for your ancestors who have
2 just devastated this earth. Stop.

3 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

4 Next is Amy Faith, then Tara Villalba, and then
5 Beverly Naidus.

6 Amy Faith, please go ahead.

7 I'm sorry. Naidus.

8 Please go ahead, Amy Faith.

9 MS. FAITH: Okay. So you're able to hear me
10 now?

11 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Yes, I can hear you.

12 MS. FAITH: Okay. Great. All right. Thank
13 you. I'm Amy Faith, and I live in Bellevue. And I'm
14 here to oppose the rate increase along with everyone
15 else.

16 I wanted to say that PSE cut down 300 mature
17 trees on 148th Street and Northeast 8th Street for the
18 Phantom Lake transmission line, and it destroyed the
19 most beautiful tree-lined street here in Bellevue. And
20 it's planning to cut down 4,000 trees to build Energize
21 Eastside, which they have been building without permits,
22 similar to the LNG plant, and without proof of need.

23 And now PSE is pushing for the 20-percent rate
24 increase to pay for these projects, and this is during a
25 time when we have record unemployment and 40 percent

1 higher inflation. We have inflation that's higher than
2 we've had in 40 years. And so I'm asking for you to
3 please deny PSE's 20-percent rate increase.

4 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

5 Tara Villalba, are you available?

6 MS. VILLALBA: Yes, I'm here.

7 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead.

8 MS. VILLALBA: My name is Tara. I am one of
9 over 40,000 renters in Bellingham and a member of the
10 Bellingham Tenants Union.

11 I'm here to urge you to reject PSE's filing for
12 a rate increase. Tenants, like everyone else surviving
13 on stagnant wages, are paying higher portions of our
14 income for utilities. PSE has made a profit for decades
15 and should be obligated to transition to clean energy
16 without passing the costs on to their customers for
17 providing a public necessity. It's unacceptable that
18 they are proposing we finance -- we finance their
19 continued profits while they continue to destroy my
20 children's future and planet.

21 What would the rate increase mean for my
22 family? Well, I'm a renter. Renting a home that is
23 poorly insulated. I can't control the level of
24 insulation of my home. That means I pay hundreds of
25 dollars a month, especially in the winter, to pay for

1 heat. Last year, we had to limit heating to the common
2 rooms to control our heating costs. I can assure you
3 our wages are not rising by nine percent.

4 The fossil fuel economy is most harmful to the
5 poorest people in our communities and most extractive in
6 tribal territories and public lands. PSE is no
7 exception.

8 As the government agency tasked to protect
9 consumers, I expect you to rein in increased
10 profiteering by corporations like PSE. I ask you to
11 ease the burden on tenants and make sure that all our
12 young people have a planet they can live good lives on.
13 Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

15 So the last person signed up right now is
16 Beverly Naidus. Let me hear from Beverly, and then we
17 will go see if there are others who wish to speak.

18 Beverly, please go ahead. Beverly Naidus? You
19 might need to unmute your phone if you are calling in.

20 MS. NAIDUS: Let me see. Can you hear me
21 now?

22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I can hear you now.
23 Thank you. Please go ahead.

24 MS. NAIDUS: Thanks for this opportunity to
25 speak to this crucial issue. I am an artist, a citizen

1 of Tacoma, and a Professor Emeritus of the University of
2 Washington in Tacoma, where I taught eco-art for almost
3 two decades.

4 I do not support the rate increase and have
5 fought to stop the LNG refinery since we moved to the
6 area. Many people in our community have come together
7 to reimagine the Port free of fossil fuels. This is
8 something that we can do if we organize.

9 We need to make sure that PSE does not get this
10 rate increase. We need to dismantle the LNG refinery.
11 The Port can be cleaned up by a bioremediation and
12 become a model of healing the trauma of many
13 generations. Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you very much.

15 Okay. So is there anyone else who wishes to
16 make comments tonight? I can go back to Cindy Kisska,
17 but I do wish to know if there's anybody else who would
18 like to make public comment tonight.

19 MR. GULLATO: I would.

20 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: And if you could
21 identify yourself for the record, please.

22 MR. GULLATO: Yeah. My name is Adam
23 Gullato. I live in Olympia.

24 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Can you spell your
25 last name, please.

1 MR. GULLATO: Sure. G-U-L-L-A-T-O.

2 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you. Go ahead,
3 please.

4 MR. GULLATO: Now, I agree with pretty much
5 everything everybody has said so far. So I thank all of
6 them because this will make this short.

7 Puget Sound Energy wants to raise their rates,
8 and there's many people who live on a fixed income and
9 are barely scraping by as is. And looking at the
10 proposed rates for the people who have natural gas and
11 electric, they're asking us to pay basically 50 bucks
12 more within the next three years per month.

13 Okay. So just as a little homework assignment
14 for myself, I looked up, at random, six executives for
15 PSE. Their total salary is about \$10.7 million. So if
16 they're looking for some money to grab, grab it from
17 them because there's people out there who are struggling
18 just to get by. There's people who are struggling just
19 to pay rent or their mortgage. Forget about the
20 bills -- the electricity bills and everything else added
21 on top of it.

22 So I'm just saying, like, the rate increase is
23 a horrible idea other than for the people who are going
24 to get money from it. And that will do it. Thank you
25 very much.

1 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

2 Is there anyone else who wishes to comment
3 tonight?

4 MS. THOMAS: Yes. My name is Susan Thomas.
5 I would like to.

6 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead.

7 MS. THOMAS: T-H-O-M-A-S. Yeah. I'm
8 sitting here at work. I knew I would concur with the
9 majority of everyone who has already spoken, and I do.
10 I unfortunately have to plop my disabled -- mentally
11 disabled client in front of the TV instead of engaging
12 with her, as I usually do, so I could listen in on this
13 public hearing.

14 I really am shocked and horrified that the LNG
15 plant is still in process and operation. I thought that
16 had been shut down by now. I am a green power customer
17 of PSE because of both the environmental reasons. I
18 very much want to do what I can with the ways that I
19 can.

20 I pay a somewhat marginal increase for that
21 green power, and I am okay with that. But the fact that
22 it is now more cost-efficient to have green energy than
23 carbon power -- it's shocking that we have to pay an
24 increase on that, and the fact that the information that
25 everybody has presented -- that most of this is enabling

1 the LNG plant, is horrifying to me.

2 I also would like to point out that I wonder
3 what people's legacies will be, whether it's people on
4 this phone or whether it's the corporate holders. What
5 kind of legacy do they think that they are going to
6 produce by having a corporation that does such acts like
7 this? Someday we will all, you know, have to face
8 consequences in various different ways, and I hope that
9 they can face up to what their actions are. I hope I
10 can face my actions.

11 At this point, generally in the wintertime, I
12 set my thermostat to 64 during the day. Generally 58 at
13 night for environmental reasons as well as cost
14 efficiency. I do not make much money. I understand
15 people need to make some money, but the amount of
16 increase is shocking as well as the reason for it. And
17 I thank everybody for all of their comments.

18 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

19 Is there anyone else who is calling in or has
20 come in by the Zoom call who wishes to speak tonight?

21 MR. SHUTTER: Yeah. This is Ron.

22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead. And
23 if you could give us your last name.

24 MR. SHUTTER: Shutter. I'm an engineer over
25 in Renton and a ratepayer. And, you know, politically,

1 I might not agree with everyone, but I'm telling you, I
2 am unified with everyone tonight.

3 I am amazed that PSE has gotten so far as they
4 have. And I really -- I'm definitely against. Put my
5 name in the ring. I'm against this increase. And,
6 yeah, this has got -- I mean, I call on UTC to start
7 investigations. I mean, some of this stuff that's been
8 mentioned, how does the UTC not see this? I mean, it's
9 just mind-boggling to me that it's gotten this far, I
10 guess. So I am definitely against it.

11 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

12 Is there anyone else who wishes to make comment
13 tonight?

14 MR. MARTIN: Yes, I would. Roger Martin.

15 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Could you please give
16 us your last name, please, and spell it.

17 MR. MARTIN: Last name is Martin,
18 M-A-R-T-I-N.

19 I'd like the UTC to take a look at a couple
20 different reports that are out there. There's a report,
21 a scientific report, published in the San Jose Mercury
22 News in 1989 and also again a year later that was put
23 out by UC Berkeley and with Arizona State University,
24 the geologists there.

25 And they have pointed out that anything built

1 on shoreline landfill sinks, and rising sea levels cause
2 it to sink faster. So that means as the sea levels go
3 up, the LNG facility goes down.

4 It also pointed out what happens when
5 earthquakes occur in the presence of shoreline landfill.
6 They demonstrated that by looking at what happened with
7 the Loma Prieta earthquake in the Mission District in
8 San Francisco that was built on landfill that came out
9 of the 1906 earthquake. And that landfill collapsed,
10 gas lines broke, fires broke out, and people got killed.

11 And then -- but that's basically sat on and
12 pretty close to a solid substrate. The substrate under
13 the landfill that was going to liquefy in a large
14 earthquake, as proven by Loma Prieta, sits on 1,500,
15 2,000 feet of basically muck before it gets to bedrock.

16 If you take a look at the most likely places
17 put up by, I believe, the Department of Natural
18 Resources and one of the federal environmental things
19 that looks at such things -- it might be -- yes, it's
20 USGS. You'll see that the highest -- the most likely
21 place for substrates to liquefy, meaning the sort of
22 muck that's there in the river plain on which the tide
23 flats sit -- it's rated as most likely to liquefy in an
24 earthquake.

25 So you have construction that's most likely to

1 liquefy. Below that is 1,500, 2,000 feet most likely to
2 liquefy, and directly under all that is the Tacoma
3 earthquake fault. That's it.

4 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

5 Is there anybody else who wishes to make public
6 comment tonight?

7 MS. STEVENS: I would like to comment.

8 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead.

9 And, Heidi, if you could give us your last name, please.

10 MS. STEVENS: Heidi Stevens. Just following
11 up on Roger's comments.

12 That area where the LNG plant is is also in a
13 lahar flow. So if Mount Rainier blows again, that
14 volcanic flow will go right through there, which is what
15 kind of made that tidal outwash to begin with.

16 So PSE is making just very poor choices, not
17 based on good scientific fact, and it's been very
18 frustrating that all the information that citizens have
19 done to produce scientific information is being
20 dismissed for their private company profit. And this
21 rate increase should absolutely not go through. And
22 thank you for listening to all of our comments tonight.

23 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

24 Is there anyone else who wishes to comment
25 tonight?

1 Okay. I'm going to ask if Pedro Valverde is
2 still on the call. If you are, I can barely hear you.

3 And did Becky Rhodes speak already?

4 MS. RHODES: I didn't want to speak.

5 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. Well, thank
6 you for that.

7 I'm just going over my list and
8 double-checking.

9 And so if nobody else wishes to speak, Cindy, I
10 will give you another minute or two, and then we will
11 close out the hearing, if you are still on the line.

12 MS. KISSKA: Yes, I am. Can you hear me?

13 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I can. And if you
14 could just, you know, very succinctly give your
15 comments, that would be helpful, and you can submit the
16 rest in writing.

17 MS. KISSKA: Okay. So my name is Cindy
18 Kisska. I'm in Birch Bay. I'm been a Puget Sound
19 Energy electric customer for 18 years. I want to say --
20 I'm sorry. I have trouble concentrating.

21 PSE is one company, not two, but the UTC treats
22 it as if it is two different companies, one for
23 shareholders and one for its customers.

24 PSE belongs to a group of five utility
25 companies called investor-owned utilities, IOUs for

1 short, that service electric and gas customers across
2 the state of Washington. And I quote, they are monopoly
3 franchises, and they exist to make a profit for their
4 shareholders. That's the problem. They exist to make a
5 profit for their shareholders, and they don't care about
6 us, the customers.

7 The profits Puget Sound Energy makes should be
8 funneled down to its customers first to lower our
9 electric rates, not funneled upwards first to pay their
10 already wealthy shareholders.

11 I know for a fact the Puget Sound Energy, the
12 UTC, and the OAG should not rest easy thinking they have
13 the poor people's backs covered when there are thousands
14 and thousands of families, including children and the
15 elderly in the state of Washington, who do not and
16 cannot qualify for such programs as LIHEAP and the HELP
17 program. This is because their income is slightly
18 above, even by just a few dollars, over the income level
19 cutoff.

20 This means there are thousands of people still
21 shivering day and night in their cold houses and
22 apartments in the winter because they cannot afford to
23 turn their thermostats up any more than they already
24 are.

25 Tell this to Puget Sound Energy's already

1 wealthy CEOs and shareholders. What sense does it make?
2 None. And Puget Sound Energy should never be allowed to
3 use the fact that we use less and less electricity as
4 one of the reasons to raise our rates. We turn down our
5 thermostats more and more to avoid having to pay higher
6 and higher electric bills.

7 How is it that Puget Sound Energy's millions
8 and billions of dollars in wealth at the top has never
9 trickled town to the bottom to translate into savings
10 for customers' rates? Yet the UTC allows Puget Sound
11 Energy to generate billions of dollars and give away
12 millions in dividends and still raise our rates every
13 single year.

14 We are told by the Attorney General's Office
15 that, in the end, the Commissioners must ensure that
16 rates are fair, just, and reasonable for all interests
17 involved. The word "interests" should not be used in
18 the same sentence when referring to shareholders and
19 customers because the meaning is completely opposite for
20 each one.

21 The shareholders' interests are vastly
22 different from the customers' interests and needs.
23 Customers' interests actually refers to customers'
24 needs. They need to stay warm in the winter and still
25 be able to afford their PSE bills, while shareholders'

1 interests means how much money, profits, they can make.

2 In other words, the already wealthy becoming wealthier.

3 Hold on one sec. Hold on, dear. I got to find
4 the right page. I'm sorry.

5 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: And if you have
6 written comments, you really should submit them in
7 writing.

8 MS. KISSKA: I will, dear. I have. I have
9 some of it, but not all. Let me just finish. I want to
10 say -- hold on. One second. Okay. Hold on, dear. Let
11 me find my place. Hold on. Okay. The last page I'm on
12 here.

13 Under this context, Puget Sound Energy being
14 allowed to raise customers' rates every year is neither
15 fair, just, nor reasonable. The wealthy don't need
16 protection, but the poor and vulnerable do. The OAG's
17 statement should be changed to read, the Commissioners
18 must ensure that rates are fair, just, and reasonable
19 for the utility customers first. Then the needs of the
20 other groups involved can be addressed.

21 Another fact. Why is Puget Sound Energy
22 allowed to ignore the UTC's direct order to Puget Sound
23 Energy to profit-share with its customers? In 2013, the
24 UTC ordered Puget Sound Energy to share its profits
25 50-50 with its customers. I know that at least two

1 other times UTC ordered them to profit-share with us,
2 but somehow Puget Sound Energy has found ways to get
3 around this. They have never shared their profits with
4 us to lower our rates. They refuse to follow these
5 orders.

6 According to Puget Sound Energy, they didn't
7 have enough profits to share with us. And I want to
8 say, but not before profits were turned over by Puget
9 Sound Energy to their shareholders. How is it that
10 Puget Sound Energy seems to become more powerful than
11 the UTC itself? Puget Sound Energy blatantly ignores
12 and gets away with it over and over again, the UTC's
13 direct orders to share their profits with their
14 customers.

15 Puget Sound Energy has financially restructured
16 itself over the years to the point where the OAG and the
17 UTC stand by and watch all the structures and safety
18 nets that used to be in place to protect Puget Sound
19 Energy customers be burnt to the ground.

20 It seems Puget Sound Energy has built itself a
21 house of cards built on a foundation of sand and an
22 ever-increasing mountain of loophole after loophole to
23 want to protect anything and everything it wants to do,
24 and no one has the courage to stand up to them.

25 If Puget Sound Energy has restructured itself

1 with so many financial loopholes, that profits to
2 shareholders come first instead of savings to customers,
3 then this deranged arrangement needs to be taken up by
4 the Attorney General's Office and these loopholes
5 closed.

6 The AG needs to step up and stop Puget Sound in
7 their tracks and make them toe the line by ensuring that
8 UTC's orders are followed, and that Puget Sound Energy
9 shares their profits with their customers first to
10 ensure they lower our rates, and that Puget Sound Energy
11 use their millions and billions of dollars in profits to
12 lower our rates.

13 Puget Sound Energy's moral obligations and
14 financial obligations should be one and the same. Right
15 now, there's a huge cavern between them. And as I
16 mentioned, there's two court cases that the Public
17 Counsel Unit with the UTC has filed against Puget Sound
18 Energy, and they've revealed that Puget Sound Energy has
19 lied and been dishonest many times in manipulating and
20 misrepresenting their financial facts to try and get
21 more money.

22 And as I said, this is shocking that this is
23 our utility company and who you, the Commissioners, have
24 to deal with. It's impossible to find honest truth when
25 dealing with Puget Sound Energy, and we the customers

1 bear the cruelty of their dishonesty.

2 So the question remains. This is how I want to
3 end this. How is it that, legally, Puget Sound Energy
4 can generate billions of dollars in revenue and give
5 away hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars in
6 profits, but none of these profits trickle down to
7 become savings to lower our customer rates? This is the
8 question of the utmost importance that needs to be
9 addressed and clearly answered, and at this moment, it
10 still has not been answered. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you.

12 MS. KISSKA: I'm sorry to get so upset, but
13 I'm passionate about it. I've been researching them for
14 four years. I have typed up three single-spaced papers
15 to read to you, and I could go on for a half an hour
16 about Puget Sound Energy.

17 And I just want to say, if you guys allow Puget
18 Sound Energy to raise their rates again after everything
19 you've heard tonight, then something is wrong with your
20 hearing. And I've been told you guys have hearts for
21 the customers. So I hope you use your heart and do not
22 allow Puget Sound Energy -- they sound like crooks -- to
23 raise our rates. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Thank you very much.

25 Thank you very much.

1 MS. KISSKA: Okay. You're welcome, dear.

2 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I want to say thank
3 you to everyone who has provided comments this evening.
4 I appreciate everyone who has stayed with us for the
5 entire time.

6 And I'm going to ask if our Chair, Dave Danner,
7 wishes to close out the hearing, or if you'd like me to
8 do so, Chair Danner.

9 MR. GULLATO: Can I get in one more
10 sentence?

11 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I'm sorry. If you've
12 already -- who is this, please?

13 MR. GULLATO: It will be super short. I
14 promise.

15 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: And who is this,
16 please?

17 MR. GULLATO: This is Adam Gullato.

18 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. Please make it
19 short, and then we're going to close out the hearing.

20 MR. GULLATO: Okay. PSE's thing is a very
21 obvious bald-faced and bold-faced, transparent, money
22 grab, energy-gouging, price-gouging fiend, basically.
23 And I urge the UTC to realize it for what it is and do
24 the right thing. Thank you and have a good night.

25 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. Thank you.

1 Chair Danner, I'm turning it over to you.

2 CHAIR DANNER: Thank you very much. And I
3 really appreciate, Commissioner, that you chaired the
4 meeting tonight. I was having Zoom issues that were
5 keeping me from participating fully, although I had my
6 cell phone audio on, and I heard everybody's comments,
7 and I took a lot of notes.

8 I, too, want to thank everyone for their
9 participation tonight. We have received a lot of
10 information. It will be part of the record. Written
11 comments will be accepted by the Commission through
12 October 3rd. So if you have written comments that you
13 want to submit or if you know others who want to submit
14 written comments, please let them know that we will
15 receive them through October 3rd.

16 So with that, I am prepared to close out the
17 hearing. Again, thank you everyone, and --

18 MS. KISSKA: Excuse me, Mr. Danner, I have
19 one thing to say. You guys only have about three days
20 to read 600 comments that have come in. And I feel like
21 you guys should receive the comments as they come in
22 from your staff so that you have time to read them, you
23 know?

24 And the other thing is, I wish you guys would
25 be able to speak to us during these meetings because it

1 feels like it's just a wall of stone-cold silence, and
2 it's so unnatural, and it's a missed opportunity for us
3 to hear from your valuable input. We never get any
4 clarification. You're the ones representing us, and you
5 never speak, and that's not right.

6 CHAIR DANNER: Thank you. I understand what
7 you're saying. We are bound by the Administrative
8 Procedure Act that governs the proceedings that we do.
9 So we have to follow them.

10 MS. KISSKA: And who makes those? Who makes
11 those, sir? Sir, who makes those? Who makes those up?

12 CHAIR DANNER: That is a Washington statute.
13 So --

14 MS. KISSKA: Statute. And who is
15 responsible? If we could change it, how would it be
16 changed? How would it be changed?

17 CHAIR DANNER: Well, I'm not going to
18 engage --

19 MS. KISSKA: Do you know? Do you know?
20 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

21 MS. KISSKA: Go ahead. That's okay. Go
22 ahead, Mr. Danner.

23 CHAIR DANNER: It is a statute. It is for
24 legislature --

25 MS. KISSKA: Yeah. Okay. Thank you for

1 sharing that. I appreciate it.

2 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: It looks like Chair
3 Danner also has more issues. So I'm going to close out
4 the hearing.

5 Cindy Kisska, thank you for your comments.

6 MS. KISSKA: Thank you, dear. Thank you
7 very much.

8 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Okay. Excuse me.

9 Somebody had asked what the hearing was
10 starting on October the 3rd. That hearing is the formal
11 evidentiary hearing where the attorneys representing the
12 various parties, including Puget Sound Energy, the
13 Public Counsel section of the Attorney General's Office,
14 the Attorney General's Office representing the
15 Commission Staff, and other parties will be presenting
16 their cases and cross-examining witnesses addressing the
17 settlements and other issues presented in the case.

18 So that hearing starts on October 3rd. We will
19 be taking everything under advisement, including the
20 comments you've all provided today, the written comments
21 we've received, and then we will have time to hear the
22 briefs from the parties, and then we will make a
23 decision.

24 So we do have time to review all the comments.
25 It's not just three days. We have time to review all

1 the comments. There's a transcript that will be
2 provided from this evening. We've recorded this event.

3 So thank you all very much for your comments,
4 and I will now adjourn the hearing. So thank you all,
5 and have a good night.

6 (Proceedings adjourned at 8:20 p.m.)

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF WASHINGTON
COUNTY OF KING

I, Rose Detloff, a Certified Court Reporter in
and for the State of Washington, do hereby certify that
the foregoing transcript is true and accurate to the
best of my knowledge, skill and ability.

Rose Detloff



ROSE DETLOFF, RMR, CRR, CCR #21036100

My commission expires:
DECEMBER 6, 2022