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



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BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

vs.

PUGET SOUND ENERGY,

Respondent.

(Consolidated)

ORDER 20

(Consolidated)

(Consolidated)

(Consolidated)

(Consolidated)

(Consolidated)

(Consolidated)

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

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| 1 | APPEARANCES |
| 2 | COMMISSIONERS: |
| 3 | DAVE DANNER, Chair |
| 4 | ANN RENDAHL, Commissioner MILT DOUMIT, Commissioner |
| 5 | COMMISSION STAFF: |
| 6 | |
| 7 | ANDREW ROBERTS |
| 8 | PUBLIC COUNSEL: |
| 9 | SHAY BAUMANN |
| 10 | |
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Page 141 1 LACEY, WASHINGTON; SEPTEMBER 28, 2022 2. 6:00 p.m. 3 -000-PROCEEDINGS 4 5 6 CHAIR DANNER: Let's go on the record. Good evening, everyone. Today is September 8 28th, 2022, and this is a virtual comment hearing of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission in 9 Dockets UE-220066 and UG-220067. 10 I'm Dave Danner. I'm Chair of the Commission, 11 12 and I'm joined by my colleagues, Commissioner Ann Rendahl and Commissioner Milt Doumit. 13 We are here this evening to take comments from 14 the public regarding Puget Sound Energy's request to 15 16 raise both electric and natural gas rates effective January 1st of 2023. Last January 31st, Puget Sound 17 18 Energy filed a request with the Commission to increase 19 electric and gas rates over the next three years. 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 Bill 5295 in 2021, which, among other things, requires 24 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.
- 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
- 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
- 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.
- 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.
- MS. DAY: Esther Day, D-A-Y.
- MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Esther.
- 24 MS. ANTMAN: Iris Antman, A-N-T-M-A-N.
- MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Iris.

- 1 MR. BRIGGS: Rob Briggs, B-R-I-G-G-S.
- MS. BLACKMON: Michelle Blackmon,
- $3 \quad B-L-A-C-K-M-O-N.$
- 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,
- $7 \quad A-N-D-E-R-S-O-N$.
- 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.
- MS. ARNOLD: Oneida Arnold, A-R-N-O-L-D.
- 15 MS. CHURCH: Barbara Church, C-H-U-R-C-H.
- MR. ROBERTS: Okay. Last call for last
- 17 names beginning A through E.
- 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,
- B-L-A-C-K-M-O-N.
- 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 quess 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.
- 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,
- $11 \quad I-V-E-Y.$
- MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Tony.
- 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?
- MS. KERN: Mary Kern, K-E-R-N.
- 21 MS. KELLER: Jennifer Keller.
- MS. KERN: K-E-R-N.
- MS. KELLER: Jennifer Keller, K-E-L-L-E-R.
- MS. KIMMERLING: Marilyn Kimmerling,
- 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?
- MR. ROBERTS: We have you, Pat. Thank you.
- MS. OAKS: Stacy Oaks, O-A-K-S.
- 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?
- 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.
- MS. VODA: Lorelei, L-O-R-E-L-E-I. Voda,
- 14 V-O-D-A.
- 15 CHAIR DANNER: Thank you.
- 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.
- 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
- 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
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 boundoggle. 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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?
- 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 --
- MS. KISSKA: One minute?
- 12 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Yes.
- 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.
- MS. BONSIGNORE: Listen, ma'am. You're not
- 11 the only one waiting to talk. So just let us talk.
- 12 Take your time.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- MR. GOTTSCHALL: Thank you.
- 22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Julia, go ahead.
- 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
- incredible stress, stress that we do not need.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 --
- MR. ROBERTS: Past a minute.
- 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.
- 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?
- 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 --
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Next is Jordan Van Voast, then Fran Korten,
- 23 then Shawn Arent.
- 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.)
- 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.
- Fran Korten, please go ahead.
- MS. KORTEN: Yes. My name is -- can you
- 22 hear me?
- 23 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: I can hear you.
- 24 Please go ahead, Fran.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Next is Don Marsh, and then after that is Jim

- 1 Bernthal, Rob Briggs, and Stacy Oaks.
- 2 So go ahead, Don Marsh.
- 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.
- 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
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- They also spend a lot of money on PR campaigns.
- 21 I know that Barbara Church mentioned earlier about all
- of the fancy ads about how they're doing this renewable
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Next is Oneida Arnold, then Rich Voget, and
- 21 then Krys Brown.
- Oneida, are you available?
- 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.
- 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 Krys

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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
- on this call, things that I didn't know and am
- 12 absolutely terrified and disgusted by PSE's practices.
- 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.
- 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 --
- MR. ROBERTS: Over a minute.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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?
- 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.
- 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?
- 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.
- Next is Peggy Printz, and then Kyle Lucas, and
- 19 then Patrick McKee.
- 20 Peggy Printz, are you on the line?
- MS. PRINTZ: Yes, I am. Hello.
- 22 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: Please go ahead.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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?
- 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
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 Poque.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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 Poque, then Amy Faith, then Tara
- 19 Villalba.
- Lester, are you available?
- MR. POGUE: Yes, I am. Thank you. My name
- 22 is Lester Clarence Poque, 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Beverly, please go ahead. Beverly Naidus? You
- 19 might need to unmute your phone if you are calling in.
- 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.
- 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.
- MR. GULLATO: I would.
- 20 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: And if you could
- 21 identify yourself for the record, please.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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?
- 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,
- $18 \quad M-A-R-T-I-N.$
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Is there anyone else who wishes to comment
- 25 tonight?

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

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     the comments. There's a transcript that will be
 1
     provided from this evening. We've recorded this event.
 2
              So thank you all very much for your comments,
 3
     and I will now adjourn the hearing. So thank you all,
 4
     and have a good night.
 5
                  (Proceedings adjourned at 8:20 p.m.)
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Page 240 1 CERTIFICATE 2 3 STATE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY OF KING 4 5 6 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 8 best of my knowledge, skill and ability. 10 11 Enilykrane Detl 12 13 ROSE DETLOFF, RMR, CRR, CCR #21036100 14 My commission expires: 15 16 DECEMBER 6, 2022 17 18 19 20 21 22 2.3 24 25