

Mak, Chanda (ATG)

From: Deborah Hill <debill49@outlook.com>
Sent: Friday, July 15, 2022 4:28 PM
To: ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel
Subject: PSE proposed rate hike for 2023 (Docket UG-220067 (natural gas service))

[EXTERNAL]

Dear Public Counsel Unit of the Washington Office of the Attorney General

RE: the proposed PSE rate hike for 2023 (Docket UG-220067 (natural gas service)) as mentioned above

Enclosed is the email I sent to the UTC regarding this rate hike. I think it preposterous that PSE is proposing a 12.15% rate hike in 2023. At a time when people are finding it harder and harder to maintain themselves in the face of inflation (which I understand reached over 9% last month) and the ongoing pandemic, and when living wage jobs are fewer and fewer, PSE cannot be seriously asking rate payers to come up with think kind of rate hike to heat their homes and/or cook their food.

As I said below, I understand that costs rise in any case and I know I will have to pay higher costs for natural gas, but this 12.15% increase is just not reasonable and represents an undue burden on Washington rate payers. The rates for subsequent years for PSE natural gas are much more in line with what people might be able to absorb, considering that wages are not rising at similar rates and retirees such as myself are only getting small yearly increases in Social Security.

I'm contacting your office because it was listed on PSE's notice of requested changes to rates and public hearings. Please do something to help protect Washington rate payers from unreasonable rate hikes such as this.

Thank you for your consideration of this message.

Sincerely,

Deborah Hill
Tacoma, WA

RE: The proposed rate 2023 PSE rate hike

Dear Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission

Regarding PSE's proposed rate hike in 2023 of an average of 12.15% for residential customers, I would like to say that such a rate hike is completely unfair and ridiculous. Even if PSE had proposed a rate hike of something like 6.15%, I would still think this to be an unfair burden on Washington rate payers.

PSE says that these rate hikes are to do things like decarbonize its energy systems to comply with state mandates as well as to recover some years of capital investments made on behalf of customers. I do not recall being asked to evaluate these investments and being allowed to vote on whether these investments made any sense. I do not understand how PSE can now come to its customers asking them to pay for PSEs investments. If they chose to make investments I would think they had also chosen to assume the cost of those investments; passing a fraction of those costs on to their customers might be reasonable but this looks like they are just wanting their customers to outright pay for their business decisions. I say no.

Further, PSE should be responsible for budgeting to do things like decarbonize its energy system which is what they should be doing anyway and not sticking it to rate and taxpayers for shortfalls in their business management.

I understand that costs are going up for many things and I note that they propose rate hikes of 2.29% in 2024 and 1.82% in 2025 which seems reasonable and understandable. But at a time when inflation has eaten large holes in every household's budget and when there are ever fewer living wage jobs to be had and taxes are not going down, asking rate payers for a 12.15% rate hike for their natural gas is asking for too much, period.

I would very much appreciate it if you recommend to PSE that they seriously revise their proposed rate hike downward.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,
Deborah Hill
Tacoma, WA