

Hartman, Brice C (ATG)

From: Mark Hartmann <m4hartmann1@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 2, 2024 11:54 AM
To: comments@utc.wa.gov; ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel; customercare@pse.com
Subject: Proposed changes to PSE rates

[EXTERNAL]

Please consider this in response to the recently shared communication proposing unproportional increases in both 2025 and 2026 to the basic monthly charges for electric services.

I realize this is a monopoly and an individual residential consumer has no influence over these fees and rate increases. However, how does one justify and support a 30% increase each year, almost doubling the monthly basic service charge in just a 2 year time period?

We recently purchased at significant costs solar panels with the objective to stabilize our utility expenses as we near retirement. We never would have anticipated as a utility service provider that you could shift and subsidize the costs from KWH usage to flat monthly charges.

If you would be good stewards of the revenue received, why are you not looking at other options instead of just hitting the consumers with significant and higher than inflation causing rate increases?

If postage and print is such a concern and expense, than why not have an option that passes those costs on to just those consumers who find that material necessary and for others, allow them to opt into electronic records and payments.

Also, if costs are increasing to pay labor and expenses to create monthly bills, why not move to bi-monthly or even quarterly to reduce your expenditures rather than continue to increase the fees you charge.

While the market is likely not there yet due to battery storage costs and capacities, the actions being proposed here will start to have consumers like us re-think the net metering approach we currently have in place and consider updating our set-up to go completely off grid, eliminating all revenue as well as the extra power we're returning through the net metering program. Then you will have less consumers and be forced to raise rates even higher, resulting in more consumers taking similar actions until only those that have no option other than staying on your grid remain.

So while you may be the only source to purchase electricity, there are becoming more options and capabilities to forgo your unreasonable increasing fees and costs.

I would urge you and those that can influence the charges you are able to set to really think hard about the 30% year over year increase to the current basic monthly charge and how that is going to significantly impact those that have or are considering to have solar as an option.

Sincerely,

