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From: Grace Ngo <ngojg@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2024 7:58 PM
To: ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel
Cc: comments@utc.wa.gov; customercare@pse.com
Subject: OPPOSE PSE rate increase request to the Washington UTC - Dockets UE-240004 (electric service) and UG-240005 (natural gas service)

[EXTERNAL]

07/25/2024

RE: Dockets UE-240004 (electric service) and UG-240005 (natural gas service)

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

My family has been Washington State residents for most of our lives. The continual rate increases for natural gas and electricity must slow down. Middle and low income families cannot keep up with the increased cost of living expenses for: housing, transportation, electricity, natural gas, groceries, car insurance, health insurance, water, garbage, etc. PSE's increase requests of 16.04% for Electric Service and 21.03% for Natural Gas Service by 2026 is outrageous! These utility rates had incurred a large increase over recent years, and now PSE wants to hike rates again.

These rate increases are going to hurt middle and low income families the most. Seniors living on fixed incomes will also be hindered. Families are still trying to catch their breathe from all of the other increases in monthly budget expenses over the past few years. I assist with multiple rental homes in WA State. These homes have natural gas hot water tanks. PSE's desire to continually raise the cost of natural gas will hurt families that just want hot water. Converting these gas heated hot water tanks to HE tankless electrical water systems is not an option at this time. I had called for quotes and was told it would cost between \$5,000-\$8,000 to remove a gas hot water tank and change it to a tankless electrical system. As someone who is a small business owner, I can assure you that I don't have the excess funds to provide this upgrade for my tenants. I charge my tenants rents below market value. The tenants I work with aren't the customers driving electric vehicles that need charging stations. They aren't asking for solar panels. They aren't demanding that WA State become all electric.

Puget Sound Energy must acknowledge that there is a large population of WA residents who desire to use natural gas for heating homes, cooking, and water. These families aren't rich. There are numerous families who are just trying to keep their lights and appliances on. I wish there were competitors in WA State to provide these resources and services. When I lived in Pennsylvania for four years, I had numerous companies to choose from that could provide electricity. I could shop around to find the most competitive prices and switch companies annually. I had the OPTION to pay for wind-produced, clean energy at a higher rate. I wasn't required to fund the clean energy projects of the state. The reasons listed for PSE's price increases in the July-August 2024 insert are not emergency needs. I believe PSE is trying to take on too many multi-million dollar projects for the wealthy living in WA State. I would like to see PSE request a reasonable increase with the UTC that covers the necessities of increased operating costs and providing a safe and reliable energy service. All of the other reasons listed for the price increase are wants and dreams for the wealthy. Customers should have the OPTION to donate to these projects and not expect every PSE customer to fund charging stations, solar panels, AI cameras, and huge capital projects that many middle and low income families will not benefit from.

I'm not opposed to PSE upgrading and modernizing facilities and services. I am opposed to the dramatic rate of price increases PSE has requested over the recent years. Customers who are asking for projects and services above and beyond the basic needs of natural gas and electricity, should be the only customers forced to fund these capital investments and wind farms. Every line item in a family's budget is increasing for WA families. It's not going to stop with PSE's requests for utilities. My basic water bill increased by 40% over the past 2 years. My car insurance increased by almost 16% this past year. Every other service provider will expect an increase. The wealthy don't have a problem with

this, but middle and low income families are struggling. I respectfully ask the UTC to approve rates that are far lower than PSE's request.

Sincerely,
Grace N.

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