

2 October, 2024

Public Counsel Unit  
Attorney General's Office  
800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000  
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Puget Sound Energy(PSE) before Utilities & Transportation Commission (UTC);  
Docket # 2023/230968 "CCA Natural Gas Risk Sharing Mechanism"; and Utility Rate  
Increases, Dockets # UE-240004 (Electricity) and #UG-240005 (Natural Gas)

Dear Attorneys representing Residential and Small Business customers of PSE:

In light of the General Election set for less than 5 weeks from now, and the multiple Citizen's Initiatives with direct impact upon the subjects of PSE's provision of power (gas and electric) and the added costs of securing carbon credits which, ultimately, devolve to the ratepayers, I would expect you to move for all three of these cases to be moved into the following year. It is not in our best interests to be saddled with higher costs for power, especially the 18.96% increase in the cost of natural gas, when the wholesale price of that commodity has been very stable and most of the unjustified rate increase is for CCA compliance. If PSE wants to share risk they should eat the cost of compliance until well after the election.

PSE is a monopoly for more than a million Washingtonians; a double monopoly (gas and electric service) for a majority of their customers. You, and the UTC, should hold them to a strict duty to deliver energy to their captive customers at the lowest cost, and highest degree of efficiency possible. Abandoning natural gas and prohibiting any new connections to gas service is not doing that. Getting out of contracts for reliable base load power generated by coal and natural gas in favor of unreliable and expensive wind and solar is not doing that. And then there are the massive battery farms proposed to "smooth out" electrical service. Communities don't want the fire and toxicity risk of such facilities in their midst. The one PSE is currently pitching will only provide electricity for eight hours to 100,000 customers. Maybe someone needs to tell them that it's dark in December here more than 15-hours-a-day and windmills don't work so well in Eastern Washington or Southern Montana when the weather freezes the turbine lubricants and ice coats the blades!

When the state sanctions a monopoly like PSE there is a paramount duty to ensure two things: Affordability and reliability of the services a captive public requires. Your office needs to advocate for that and remind the UTC of that. Moreover, I have not heard a single person in state government, at PSE, or anyone who advocates for the CCA and the Natural Gas Ban explain how charging excessive rates for less reliable power, with no redundancy (think home/business generators) to eight million Washingtonians does anything to improve the environment or the planet. Shipping heavy industry to China, India, and anywhere else they continue to bring coal and gas-fired power plants on line;

plus the mining to secure the rare earth elements for batteries and other technology that is often done with no concern for environmental damage, kind of defeats the purpose of the CCA and the moves PSE wishes to make.

As I understand it, PSE is owned by overseas concerns and their profits go to bolster the retirement plans of various public employees in three Canadian Provinces and in the Netherlands. That, alone, may explain why they want to extract excessive rates from us. You need to stop it. Rate increases for power, either variety, need to be held to the actual cost of acquiring power and not the costs of entering into new agreements with so-called "Green Energy" providers. They can pick up where they left off after the vote if the public sees it their way. Shelve the "Risk Sharing Plan" and hold rate increases to actual cost from present providers for now. Allowing PSE to add inflationary pressures to hard-pressed families and businesses when the proximate cause of it, the CCA, may well be voted out, is not advisable.

Yours, as a PSE gas and electric customer/captive,



Bruce A. Haigh  
5016 - 114th AVE NE  
Kirkland, WA 98033-7715  
425 891-2131 cell/text