



BLUEGREEN ALLIANCE

WASHINGTON STATE

June 17, 2020

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
621 Woodland Square Loop SE
Lacey, WA 98503

RE: Comment on Docket # U-200281

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the Washington BlueGreen Alliance, thank you for convening a special meeting to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on Washington ratepayers. We are extremely grateful for the opportunity to comment on Docket #U-20028.

The Washington BlueGreen Alliance is a coalition of labor unions and environmental organizations committed to solving today's environmental challenges in ways that create and maintain quality jobs and build a stronger, fairer economy. At present, our top priority is addressing the immediate needs of working families and our state's most vulnerable citizens.

COVID-19 is as much a social and economic crisis as it is a public health crisis. We are experiencing unemployment levels unseen since the Great Depression. Although this economic disruption is partly the result of the closures necessary to respond to the pandemic, it has been hugely exacerbated by our unjust economic system. Pervasive low-wage, unstable work with inadequate paid leave and poor health coverage has yielded a large number of working poor individuals and families living paycheck to paycheck that are highly vulnerable to crises like COVID-19.

As Washington rebuilds in the wake of the pandemic, we have an obligation to advance a fairer, more resilient economy by incentivizing high-road job creation and pushing back on regressive policies that have enhanced corporate power and exacerbated income inequality. However, working people and families in Washington cannot wait for long-term structural change—we need action now.

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June 17, 2020

Page 2

One of the most immediate and impactful steps that we can take to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on Washington's most vulnerable residents and to promote resilience is to protect access to basic and essential services, including running water, electricity, and telecommunications.

The Washington BlueGreen Alliance calls on the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to do all in its power to ensure that every Washington resident has access to stable, debt-free utilities—both now and beyond the pandemic. This includes: 1) stopping utility shutoffs, 2) creating just, workable repayment plans, and 3) no debt for poor and working class families.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch if you have questions or require additional materials.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Koski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jessica Koski, Ph.D.

Washington State Policy Coordinator, BlueGreen Alliance