

April 20, 2021

RE: PSE Rate Case, Docket UE-200980

Dear Commissioners,

I would first like to thank you for this opportunity to comment on PSE's rate increase for electric customers.

While no one likes to pay higher electricity rates, I am concerned about the reasons for the request. The first reason stated for the increase in rates is "higher natural gas costs". As a ratepayer, I am concerned that PSE is overdependent on natural gas for power generation. Not only are ratepayers currently exposed to the variability and volatility of natural gas prices but that this risk will grow if PSE does not chance course and begin to rapidly replace gas with renewables including wind, solar along with supporting storage.

The University of Washington's Climate Impact Group is forecasting decreasing hydro availability in late summer and early fall as an increasing risk because of climate change. Without adequate renewables, particularly solar and storage, PSE will be forced to use more gas to meet summer demand. This is occurring at a time when summer electrical demand is increasing because of the need for air conditioning.

PSE's dependence on natural gas also leaves ratepayers exposed to increase costs from likely carbon pricing legislation. In the final days of the current state legislative session, a serious effort is being made to pass some form of carbon pricing. While the effort in this legislative session may not succeed, lawmakers at both the federal and state level will continue to work to some form of carbon pricing to reduce carbon pollution.

As a ratepayer I am quite willing to pay for higher electricity rates to support investment in renewable energy. I strongly object to paying increased rates for climate destroying natural gas. I am asking that the Commission deny a rate increase to PSE because of higher gas costs. PSE needs to understand that they will not be rewarded for imprudent investment and a failure to move rapidly to decarbonize their power supply.

Sincerely,

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