From: noreply@wa-governor.com on behalf of Cortina Yballa
To: UTC Ex Parte@utc.wa.gov
Subject: Comments on Dockets Puget Sound Energy UE-200760 & UG-200762, Avista UE-200407 & UG-200408, Pacific Power UE-200236, Cascade Natural Gas UG-200479, NW Natural UG-200364
Date: Thursday, November 19, 2020 4:24:27 PM

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Dear UTC Commissioners,

We urge you to reject the utilities' deferred accounting petitions and issue a statement calling for shared sacrifice from the utilities.

The utilities are not guaranteed profit and are not exhibiting any signs of financial trouble from the pandemic. These deferred accounting petitions are the utilities' attempt at guaranteeing hundreds of millions in profit for shareholders and executives without making an offer of shared sacrifice to Washington residents during a historic public health and economic crisis. The deferred accounting petitions are too broad, don't require the utilities to track savings just as closely as they track costs, and include discriminatory fees that the utilities have been prohibited from collecting by Governor Inslee.

Year after year, Puget Sound Energy, Avista, PacifiCorp, Northwest Natural, and Cascade Natural Gas make hundreds of millions in profit. They collectively paid $446 million to their shareholders and top executives in 2019 alone (1). Meanwhile, Latinx, Indigenous, Pacific Islander, and Black households are suffering from COVID-19 at disproportionately high rates (2) and nearly a million Washingtonians are receiving food assistance, up 17% from February. (3)

This issue is important to me because I am tired of seeing my friends and loved ones, especially those that are Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, suffering through this pandemic because of financial burdens like utilities. You make your values abundantly clear when you provide exemptions to these large, powerful corporations that pay shareholders and executives hundreds of millions of dollars while leaving those Washingtonians most impacted by the pandemic without support. We need for-profit utilities to take on this burden if we are to have any hope of recovering from this moment of crisis together. Our federal government has failed to provide us relief and if you commit to protecting profits over people, it sends the same message: that you are choosing to continue a track record of racism, greed, and moral bankruptcy as we approach a second major economic lockdown. As Utilities and Transportation Commissioners appointed by Governor Inslee, you are meant to be represent the interests of ALL of Washington's PEOPLE, not corporations. You have the opportunity to tell Washingtonians that the lives of my friends living paycheck to paycheck are not worthless to you.

If you truly believe in your mission "to protect consumers ensuring that utility and transportation services are fairly priced, available, reliable and safe," then I urge you to put people before utility profit. Help Washington to equitably power through the pandemic, and require utilities to share in the sacrifice demanded of us all.

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(1) According to 2019 filings to the Securities and Exchange Commission on dividends and executive compensation.
(2) https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com?
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Sincerely,
Cortina Yballa
1521 N 107th St Unit B Seattle, WA 98133-8931
cortina@povertyaction.org