



OFFICE OF SENATOR DEB PATTERSON

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**Oregon Senator Deb Patterson and Colleagues Secure Commitments
to Keep Service Connected for Struggling Families**

Urging from lawmakers prompted swift action by major Oregon utility companies

SALEM, OR – Following calls from Senator Deb Patterson (D-Salem) and 17 of her legislative colleagues urging protection for struggling Oregonians during the ongoing federal government shutdown, multiple utility companies have agreed to take steps to ensure customers can stay warm.

On November 7, Senator Patterson and her colleagues delivered a letter to the Oregon Public Utilities Commission urging action to prevent utility disconnections for Oregonians affected by the federal government shutdown. Utility providers have responded quickly to share their plans to keep customers connected. Major utilities have announced measures to hold off on disconnecting service to households whose finances are hit hard by the federal shutdown.

"I'm grateful to see Oregon's major utilities stepping up for families during this challenging time," said Senator Patterson. "No one should be left without heat or electricity because of political gridlock in D.C."

The Oregon Public Utility Commission has worked extensively in recent years on disconnection protections. The commission has authority to impose a moratorium on service shutoffs, but it can happen faster when utilities voluntarily make that move. Senator Patterson's letter to Oregon's energy-sector leaders prompted swift action.

"These agreements show what's possible when we work with local leaders to put people first," Patterson added.

Summary of commitments:

- Pacific Power and PGE are halting shutoffs through the end of the year for income-qualified and medically vulnerable customers.
- NW Natural is suspending shutoffs through the end of the year for income-qualifying customers.
- Cascade Natural Gas is suspending collections and disconnections for 30 days for customers who receive financial utility assistance or who report they have been affected by the federal government shutdown.

- Avista Corp will provide a 30-day grace period for customers affected by the federal shutdown, which will prevent them from entering the collections process and potential shutoffs.
- Idaho Power will implement a temporary moratorium on disconnections for customers affected by the government shutdown until the federal government reopens.

Read the original letter here: bit.ly/PUC-letter.

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