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Ferrioli aims to stop investor-owned power companies from gouging Oregonians

SALEM, Ore.-Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli has a plan to stop investor-owned utilities (IOU), like Portland General Electric (PGE), from gouging ratepayers. His bill, [Senate Bill 909](#), called the "Ratepayers Protection Act," he says, will fix the state's broken energy policy that is hurting vulnerable Oregonians. The proposal will be heard in the Senate Business and Transportation Committee at 3:00 PM [today](#).

Ferrioli released the following statement:

"When we have Oregonians getting evicted because of out-of-control costs of living the last thing we need is the government enabling rich companies like PGE to squeeze them for more money, with seemingly no acceptable explanation."

Ferrioli [expressed concern earlier this session](#) when [PGE proposed a rate increase](#). The proposed rate hike would vary by customer class. Residential customers could be hit with a 7.1 percent hike. Small businesses could be hit with a 5.7 percent hike. The proposed rate hike came on the heels of Ferrioli's introduction of the [Ratepayers Protection Act](#) and right as their shares hit a 52-week high.

"This bill will provide the most benefit to those most needy and living on fixed incomes. Anyone concerned about the most economically disadvantaged citizens should be supporting this bill," said Irene Gilbert in a [submitted testimony](#).

Ferrioli's opinion-editorial that ran in The Oregonian following this episode can be read [here](#). PGE reacted to Ferrioli's calls to end this practice of gouging

Oregonians, it can be read [here](#).

The Ratepayers Protection Act contains the following key fixes:

- Public utilities shall not establish a rate of return that exceeds 4.5 percent
- Public purpose charges shall not exceed 1.5 percent of utility customer costs
- The gross collection of public purpose charges shall not exceed 2015 total
- No Energy Trust of Oregon employee shall be paid more than the governor and non-salary benefits shall not exceed 25 percent of base salary
- If the Klamath Dam removal is not started by Jan. 1, 2018, the dam removal surcharge will be discontinued, funds collected by PacifiCorp shall be returned pro-rata to ratepayers with 4 percent interest paid from date monies were received from ratepayers
- IOU prohibited from increasing rates to pay any Superfund cleanup expenses
- State executive-level employees, public utilities commissioners and staff are prohibited from being employed by IOU for two years following their employment with the state or public utility

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