

Expanding Energy Assistance

Increasing the Oregon Energy Assistance Program (OEAP)

HB 3792

MEETING THE ENERGY AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

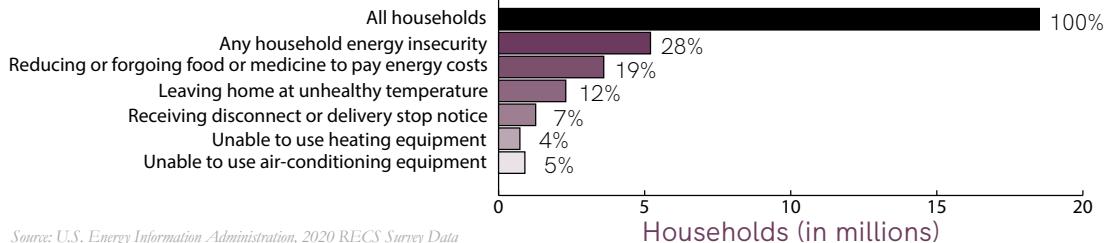
ENERGY HAS GOTTEN TOO EXPENSIVE

As bills have gone up, bill payment assistance programs have largely stagnated, leading to rising power shutoffs. Since 2021, PGE and Pacific Powers households' energy bills have increased by nearly 50%. In 2024, these utilities together disconnected nearly 58,000 households—the most since reporting started in 2018. **Oregon needs to increase funding for the Oregon Energy Assistance Program to meet growing need.**

Since OEAP was first established almost twenty years ago, core funding for the program has not kept up. As a result, **less than one in five Oregonians who need and qualify for energy assistance can access it.**

MORE THAN KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON

2020 Residential Energy Consumption Survey
West: Pacific



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2020 RECS Survey Data

Monthly Charge

<\$1.50



Annual Fund

\$40mil



BY CUSTOMERS, FOR CUSTOMERS

OEAP is customer funded by a small amount collected on each PGE and Pacific Power electricity bill. These funds are only available to low-income residential customers of these utilities who meet eligibility requirements. OEAP is a vital source of energy assistance because it is more flexible than federal bill payment assistance (LIHEAP). As we continue to face uncertainty about federal funding, this program will provide stable and consistent assistance for Oregonians.

WHAT THE BILL DOES

HB 3792: EXPANDING ENERGY ASSISTANCE

With a current annual budget of \$20 million, the need drastically outweighs the available funds. This bill increases the annual amount for OEAP to be combined with other affordability programs.

\$40 Million for Oregon Energy Assistance Program (OEAP)

- **Amending current law** for establishing funds collected in rates for low-income electric bill payments and crisis assistance for customers of Portland General Electric and Pacific Power.
- **Increases amount collected for OEAP to \$40 million** and establishes this amount as a floor.
- **Oregonians would pay less than \$1.50 each month to OEAP**, doubling the current amount collected.
- Directs the Oregon Public Utility Commission to **re-evaluate the annual budget every two years**, along with the existing business customer cap.

Increasing OEAP funds will help more Oregonians pay down past-due balances, stay connected to electricity, and avoid the cascading impacts of disconnection.

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COMMUNITY SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONAL ENDORSEMENTS



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