

**DEB PATTERSON
STATE SENATOR
SENATE DISTRICT 10**



OREGON STATE LEGISLATURE

November 7, 2025

Chair Letha Tawney
Commissioner Les Perkins
Commissioner Karin Power
Oregon Public Utility Commission
201 High St. SE, Suite 100
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Utility Shutoffs Amid the Federal Government Shutdown

Dear Chair Tawney, Commissioner Perkins, and Commissioner Power,

Since the federal government shutdown began on October 1, 2025, the economic impacts have rippled throughout our economy and hurt household budgets across Oregon. Many households now face an impossible choice between buying food or paying their energy bills.

Federal employees have been on furlough or working without pay for over a month. The shutdown has delayed the distribution of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds, which help families put food on the table and keep their lights on. Even though SNAP benefits are flowing again this morning, these benefits remain at risk as the shutdown drags on. If the government does not reopen by November 15, funding will also end for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, which supports pregnant people, moms, and young children.

In regular times, utility companies have shutoff policies for when customers fail to pay their utility bills. However, the federal shutdown is an unprecedented crisis that is hitting families hard, through no fault of their own. We are also entering the cold weather season, when families need access to heating. Disconnecting households from their utilities during this time would compound Oregonians' suffering and make it even more difficult for families to stay afloat.

In this extraordinarily difficult time for our state, we urge Oregon's utility companies and the Oregon Public Utility Commission to act to prevent the suspension of SNAP, LIHEAP, and other at-risk public benefits from causing utility shutoffs. Oregonians have always come together to take care of each other during times of crisis. Please adopt policies to prevent utility disconnections during the federal government shutdown.

Sincerely,

Senator Deb Patterson
Senate District 10

Senator Jeff Golden
Senate District 3



Senator Courtney Neron Misslin
Senate District 13



Senator Wlmsvey Campos
Senate District 18



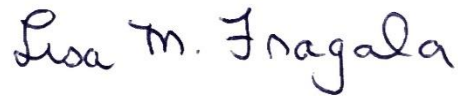
Senator Mark Meek
Senate District 20



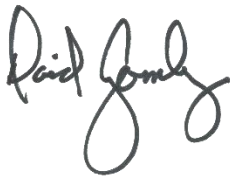
Senate Khanh Pham
Senate District 23



Senator Kayse Jama
Senate District 24



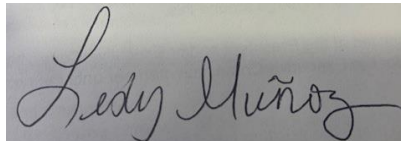
Representative Lisa Fragala
House District 8



Representative David Gomberg
House District 10



Representative Tom Andersen
House District 19



Representative Lesly Muñoz
House District 22



Representative Ben Bowman
House District 25



Representative Susan Rieke Smith
House District 26



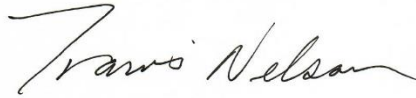
Representative Nathan Sosa
House District 30



Representative Hai Pham
House District 36



Representative Daniel Nguyễn
House District 38



Representative Travis Nelson
House District 44



Representative Willy Chotzen
House District 46