

## Tips for Participating at Public Input Hearings

When the Public Utility Commission (PUC) believes there is definite public interest in a utility's formal case before them, the PUC may hold a public input hearing. The Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) offers the following tips for those who would like to speak at the hearing:

- **Please Participate.** This is your opportunity to make the PUC and the utility company aware of any concerns that you have regarding the company's service and its request for changed rates or service.
- **Come Early.** Try to arrive early. If possible, try to be there at least 10 to 15 minutes before the meeting is to begin. You will then have the opportunity to hear the introductions and the PUC Administrative Law Judge's instructions at the beginning of the hearing.
- **Sign up If You Want to Testify.** Witnesses are usually called to testify in the order they have signed in.
- **Prepare What You Want to Say in Advance.** It is helpful to prepare your statement ahead of time. If you are nervous about speaking in public, you may want to write out your statement and then read it at the hearing.
- **Be Sworn In.** Unless you are sworn in as a witness your testimony will not become part of the record in the case.
- **Add Your Own Experience.** As a customer of the utility, you have unique information. When you testify, give specific examples to support the issues you address. If other customers have already testified about the same issue, you may still mention it. It will show the issue is not affecting just one person. If there are many speakers, the Judge may set a time limit for each witness.
- **Speak Slowly and Clearly.** Your testimony is important. Make sure you are understood.
- **Written Statements.** If you have a written statement or other papers that you want to give to the Judge as evidence, please try to bring extra copies with you. One copy goes to the Judge, and two to the court reporter. You should also bring copies to give to the active parties in the case.
- **Questions.** Sometimes one of the parties in the case may want to ask you a question about your testimony. Listen carefully to the question and answer it the best you can. It is okay if you do not know the answer.
- **Assistance from the OCA.** If you need information about the case or about how to testify, please feel free to contact the OCA at 800-684-6560. An OCA attorney will be at all public input hearings when our office is part of the case. Please ask the OCA attorney any questions you may have. The OCA is there to help consumers.

**Thank You for Your Interest**

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