



RECLAIM OUR POWER!
Utility Justice Campaign



*****PRESS RELEASE*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BERKELEY URGES CALIFORNIA TO INVEST IN A NOT-FOR-PROFIT UTILITY; SEN. WAHAB INTRODUCES SB 332, THE INVESTOR-OWNED UTILITY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2025

Berkeley, CA – In a unanimous vote, the Berkeley City Council approved a [resolution](#) last night urging the State of California to commission a feasibility study that compares various not-for-profit utility models prioritizing public benefits and the development of an equitable implementation plan to establish a statewide not-for-profit utility known as “Golden State Energy” as a successor to investor-owned utilities (IOUs) such as PG&E.

The Berkeley resolution, co-authored by Councilmember Igor Tregub and Councilmember Cecilia Lunaparra, also pledges Berkeley’s support for state-level action. As stated by Councilmember Tregub, “The monopolistic investor-owned utility model has, for too long, left working-class families behind so that shareholders could reap record profits. It’s past time to reimagine how we obtain our power and ensure that it is local, renewable, and affordable.”

The City Council meeting was preceded by a rally attended by over thirty diverse members of the Berkeley community. According to Councilmember Cecilia Lunaparra, “I believe our community’s safety, reliability, affordability and resilience needs will remain unmet under PG&E, and there are clear steps the state can take to improve our energy system. I ran for office promising to do whatever I could to replace PG&E with a not-for-profit model and this resolution is the first step of many to achieving that vision for the future of energy in California.”

On the heels of Berkeley’s vote, Senator Dr. Aisha Wahab (D-Silicon Valley) introduced [SB 332, the Investor Accountability Act of 2025](#), which addresses ongoing issues of affordability and safety with California’s investor-owned utilities. “People care about affordability and safety. What we do matters to protect and support 40 million Californians. This bill gives power back to the people on rates, safety, and holds investor-owned utilities accountable,” said Dr. Wahab.

The Investor-Owned Utility Accountability Act is a multi-prong approach that will:

1. Cap IOU rate increases for residential customers to no more than the Consumer Price Index
2. Prohibit the shut-off of utilities for specified vulnerable ratepayers to ensure their health and safety needs are met
3. Reduce ratepayer contributions to the Wildfire Fund, and increase IOUs responsibility for the fund
4. Require annual audits of equipment and the replacement of equipment that's outlived its usable life in high fire risk areas
5. Require proposed executive compensation be contingent on safety metrics
6. Require undergrounding for replacement equipment
7. Fund resilience hubs and community infrastructure to meet power needs during emergencies
8. Fund a feasibility study to determine what form of utility best serves ratepayers

SB 332 is sponsored by Reclaim our Power and Center for Biological Diversity, and must pass Senate policy committees and pass off of the Senate Floor no later than June 6, 2025, before moving to the Assembly for consideration.

As Colin Cook-Miller, Reclaim Our Power's communications organizer, said, "We believe that a better energy system is possible. The transition to a new not-for-profit utility cannot sacrifice anybody, including unionized utility workers. This bill addresses the immediate needs of our communities who are most impacted by the harms of the investor-owned utilities, and is an important step in creating a more equitable, worker-centered, and sustainable energy system that would put people and the planet over profits."

"Every person living in an investor-owned utility service area in California knows that something is wrong with our energy system. What this bill gives us are the tools to take apart and fix what's broken. When California energy monopolies fail to do their job, endanger communities and workers, and collect record profits all the while, it's up to us to take the power back," said Zoe Jonick, lead organizer with 350 Bay Area Action.

The City of Berkeley joins the City of Richmond and the City and County of San Francisco in recognizing that moving beyond investor-owned utilities is a common sense and responsible way forward that gives Californians the option to choose a new, not-for-profit utility model that promotes energy justice, affordability, and climate resilience. Senator Wahab's bill responds to the resolutions passed, and aims to address the immediate and long-term needs of communities who have been harmed by the investor-owned utilities, and reflects an important step in creating a safe, reliable, affordable, resilient and just energy system.

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