



RECLAIM OUR POWER!
Utility Justice Campaign

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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California Lawmakers Block Modest Step Toward Energy Justice, But the Movement Is Growing

The Investor-Owned Utilities Accountability Act, killed in committee, would have explored cost-saving alternatives to for-profit monopolies PG&E, SCE, and SDG&E

Sacramento, CA — Last Friday, the California Assembly Appropriations Committee quietly shelved [Senate Bill 332, the Investor-Owned Utilities Accountability Act](#), by holding it in the suspense file.

SB 332 would have studied the costs and benefits of replacing investor-owned utilities PG&E, SCE, SDG&E, and SoCalGas with a not-for-profit utility model. It would also have required executive compensation to be contingent on safety and affordability metrics, and would have required publicly-owned utilities to report disconnection data to the public.

Authored by Senator Wahab, and co-authored by Senator Hurtado and Assemblymembers Garcia and Ortega, the bill was co-sponsored by the Center for Biological Diversity and the Reclaim Our Power: Utility Justice Campaign. SB 332 passed the Senate in June with 25 affirmative votes. It subsequently passed the Assembly Utilities and Energy Committee in July on a 11-5 vote.

“This bill would have let us ask the most basic question: Can we do better than PG&E, SCE, and SDG&E by taking shareholder profits out of the equation? The answer is yes—we already know that,” said Nyah Tisdell, East Oakland Community Organizer with Communities for a Better Environment. “SB 332 would’ve given us the tools to start building real alternatives.”

California households pay the highest electricity rates in the continental US. Over 7 million Californians are behind on their utility bills. In 2024 alone, California’s investor-owned utilities shut the power off to 317,000 households due to nonpayment: disproportionately Black, brown, Indigenous, disabled, and elderly residents.

“Let’s be real—this is a political choice that puts corporate profit over people’s lives,” said Xochitl Cortez, Executive Director of Frontline Catalysts. “This isn’t just about our coalition. Across California, communities are rising up – renters, youth, climate organizers, everyday ratepayers –

we're all demanding something better. We need energy justice that puts people and the planet first."

Although SB 332's feasibility study would have cost \$5 million, this figure pales in comparison to the potential savings the state could generate by switching to a not-for-profit utility model. [A 2023 analysis commissioned by the CPUC Public Advocate's Office](#) found Californians could save \$28 billion if the state, not investor-owned utilities, built our transmission infrastructure. That's just one piece of the puzzle. If we apply the same logic systemwide, the potential savings are staggering—and the benefits go far beyond cost.

Once again, California legislators have chosen not to invest in solutions that address the root causes of our energy affordability crisis, despite overwhelming public support.

"This is about energy as a human right, not a commodity," said Jessica Tovar, Executive Director of the Local Clean Energy Alliance. "We're fighting for a system where shutoffs for poverty are banned, where communities—not corporations—decide our energy future, and where we build a grid that heals our planet instead of harming it."

What happened to SB 332 is a setback, but the movement for utility justice in California is gaining strength. 111 organizations and over a dozen local elected officials, collectively representing millions of Californians, endorsed SB 332.

The Reclaim Our Power coalition's SB 332 endorsement letter to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, with a list of supporting organizations and elected officials, can be found [here](#). SB 332 was also endorsed by the California Democratic Party, the City of San Diego and the Environmental Working Group.

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The [Reclaim Our Power: Utility Justice Campaign](#) exists to build the movement to abolish PG&E and replace it with a safe, reliable, renewable, regenerative, decentralized utility (or multiple utilities) that is/are community and worker controlled.