



THE
CHISHOLM
LEGACY
PROJECT

Who Holds the



Demystifying and Democratizing
Public Utilities Commissions







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Introduction: Do You Know Who Holds The Power (and the Air, and the Heat, and the Water...) ?

How many of us fully understand who are the entities responsible for ensuring the air we breathe and is clean and whether the energy we use is safe? For maintaining affordable electric bills? For providing access to resources to help us conserve energy? For ensuring that customers are not cut off from our heat, our water, and our electricity supply?

Each state has a little-known entity that holds a significant level of responsibility for all these aspects of our daily lives. Some states call these bodies a Public Service Commission (PSC), while other states call it a Public Utilities Commission (PUC).¹ (We will use the terms PSC and PUC interchangeably throughout this report.) These so-called PSCs and PUCs are composed of commissioners who hold decision making responsibilities and power over the energy and/or water resources that are generated and consumed in our communities. In some cases, the PSCs/PUCs also govern public transportation systems and telecommunications. *For the purposes of this paper, the focus will largely be on ensuring equitable and representational governance in energy regulation.*

While most commissioners are appointed by the state's governor, in some states, commissioners are elected. Regardless of how PUC commissioners gain their posts, they are a part of our political apparatus. This further affirms the need for citizens to be informed, engaged voters so that we are fully aware of the ramifications of our votes.

This report aims to demystify this critical entity and help us all ensure that we have people who represent our interests in positions of decision making authority. The power to make decisions about the quality of our air and water, the affordability of our energy, and the practices that contribute to catastrophic climate change should—and can—rest within the hands of the communities most impacted.

In other words, when it comes to our heating, electricity, and water needs, as well as the sustainability of our planet, elections matter!

THE BASICS: THE “WHAT” AND “WHY” OF PUCs

Demystifying the Entity That Is Quietly Deciding How We Live

PUCs hold power over key decisions related to the energy resources that power our homes and businesses (and often pollute our air and water). These decisions include how much we pay in electricity bills, what our energy sources are, and whether new energy production facilities are approved.

¹ Note: “PSCs” and “PUCs” are used interchangeably in this report. Any references to either should be considered to include all such commissions.



For example, PUCs may consider and evaluate decisions such as a proposal to build a new power plant or upgrade an existing one, investments in solar or energy efficiency resources, or changes in a utility's customer rates for electricity.²

Though there is variation from state to state, the overarching responsibilities of the PUCs typically include:

- Setting just and reasonable utility rates and ensuring that utilities provide adequate and reliable service to customers
- Authorizing and overseeing investments in energy resources such as power plants
- Reviewing and approving utility's energy resource plans
- Regulating private, investor-owned natural gas, electric, telephone, water and private sewer companies
- Approving new developments/facilities

The "typical" PUC consists of three nonpartisan commissioners who are appointed by the Governor, serving 6 year terms with no term limits. However, PUCs vary greatly from state to state across a range of characteristics, including the size of the commission by budget and number of commissioners, whether commissioners are appointed or elected, the political affiliation of commissioners, and the length of their terms. See Appendix A for more information on PUCs, including data on a range of parameters.

Breakdown of Commissions by Type

	Appointed	Elected
Partisan	1	10
Nonpartisan	39	0

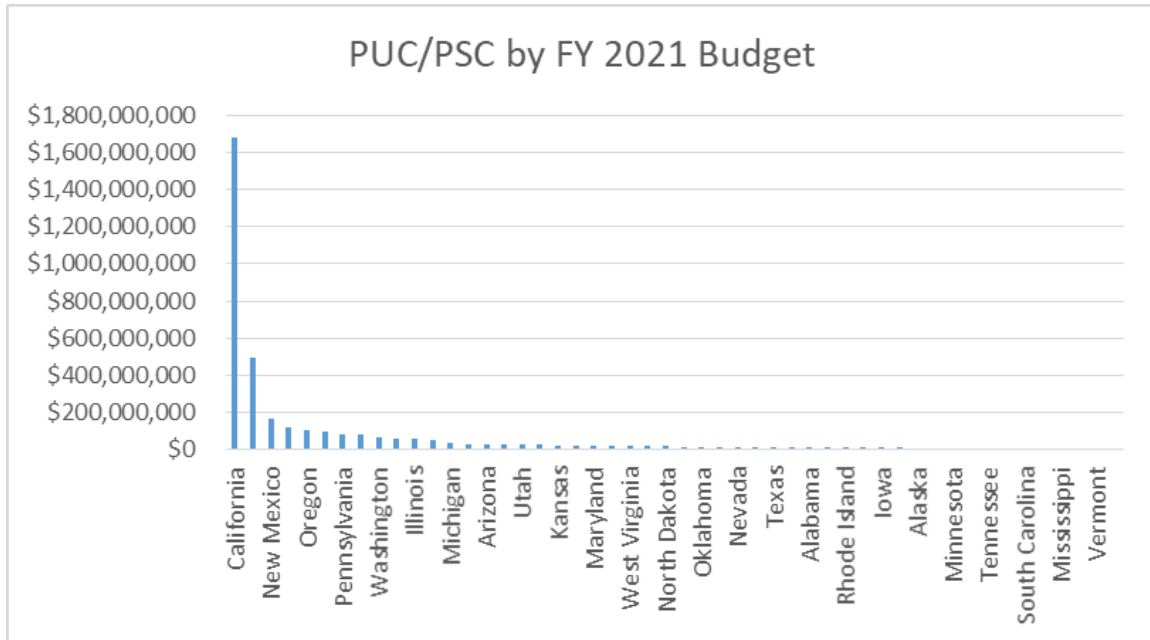
Among the 50 PUCs, 40 have appointed commissioners and 10 have elected commissioners. Of the 40 appointed PUCs, 39 are officially nonpartisan, while all 10 of the elected PUCs are partisan positions. The Illinois Commerce Commission is the only PUC with appointed, partisan commissioners. The other 10 PUCs—including those of Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and South Dakota—consist of elected, partisan commissioners, with 8 of these 10 PUCs holding elections in states that are considered red states (where voters predominantly vote for the Republican Parties) and the other 2 are purple/swing states,--Arizona and Georgia(states where Democrats and Republicans have a similar level of support among voters).³

² These dockets typically appear before the PUC/PSC of states with regulated electricity markets. Merchant plants in deregulated states may not need PUC/PSC approval.

³ States' political affiliations are designated based on categorization from Pew Research Center, which categorizes states as blue/lean blue, battleground, and red/lean red states.: <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/10/09/election-and-voter-attitudes-appendix/>.



PUCs differ significantly by budget as well. For instance, California (\$1.7 billion budget in 2021) and South Dakota (\$0.5 billion budget in 2021) have, by far, the largest PUCs. California's PUC budget almost single handedly exceeds the budgets of all other PUCs *combined* (\$2.0 billion combined budget in 2021 for the 49 other PUCs). The five largest PUCs by budget—California, South Dakota, New Mexico, Virginia, and Oregon—account for \$2.6 billion annually, or 70% of the total budget for all PUCs combined. The vast majority of commissions, nearly 38 of 50, have budgets under \$35 million, while a quarter (12) have annual budgets under \$10 million.



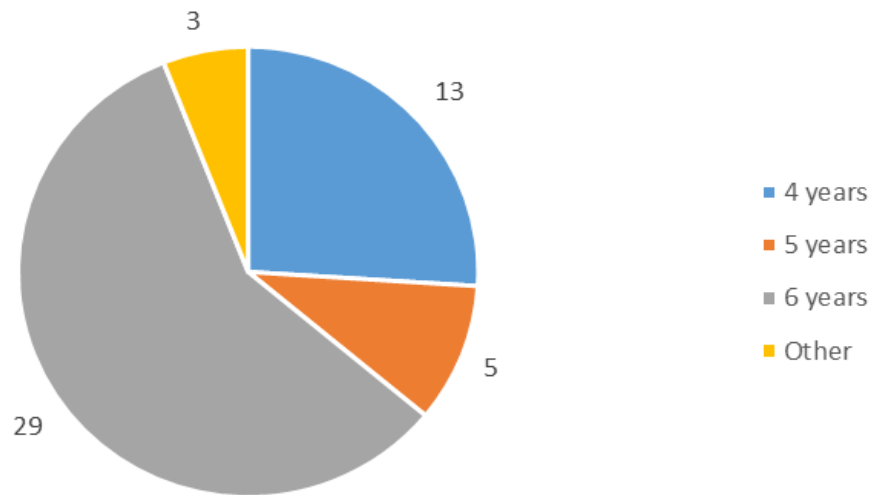
PUCs also vary in size, as noted, ranging anywhere from three to eight commissioners. The majority of commissions are composed of three commissioners, while the second-most common size is five commissioners. The majority of commissions, 46 of the 50 (92%) commissions have between three and five commissioners. Some states—notably, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee—have seven or more commissioners.

Commissioners have different term lengths, depending on the commission's rules. The most common term length is 6 years (29 PUCs) with the next most common being 4 years (13 PUCs). Some PUCs have more ambiguous term lengths, such as the Kansas Corporation Commission and Missouri PSC, where commissioners serve 'at the governor's pleasure' and Massachusetts PUC, where two commissioners are appointed for a term that coincides with



the governor's term and one is appointed for a four-year term. With regard to term limits, the vast majority of states, 45 out of 50, do not impose such requirements, while Arizona, Louisiana, Montana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma have limits of two terms.

Share of PUCs by Term Length



Size of Commissions



In short, PUCs vary significantly by state and have distinct governance structures that make them unique. Identifying opportunities to improve representation and equity-based decision making will therefore require a strong understanding of the rules of each PUC.

“When I saw my bill in February 2016, I called [the utility company]—in tears—asking them why my bill was so high. I couldn’t afford it... [The utility company] did their calculations... and they told me that my bill was high because I was using much more energy than my neighbors. But most of the homes in my neighborhood are vacant, so [the utility company] was comparing energy usage in my fully occupied home, where I lived with my kids, to energy usage in the empty houses around me. I was already doing my best to limit my energy usage—we unplugged appliances, and, to this day, we put plastic on the windows to conserve heat. But [the utility company] kept increasing my bills every three months.”

- Stephanie Johnson, Michigan resident and Soulardarity member.

See Appendix C for full testimony

Underserving the People, Empowering the Polluters: The Impact of the Current Model

As it stands, a combination of factors mean that the people who are most impacted by polluting industries and practices have the least power over the decisions being made. These factors include: the demographic profile of commissioners, ongoing rampant voter disenfranchisement, gerrymandering by facility owners with relationships to PSCs/PUCs, the incredible influence that utility companies exert via regulatory capture (dominating processes for developing regulations), sway over governors and legislatures, and, in some cases, outright corruption.

Who is most affected by energy regulations, and how?^{4, 5, 6}

- a. Communities with low incomes across the board use the highest proportion of their incomes on energy.
- b. People who are older use the highest proportion of their often fixed incomes on energy than any other age group.
- c. African American people use the highest proportion of their incomes on energy of any racial group.
- d. Communities with low incomes are more likely to have water shut-offs and electricity shut offs thereby depriving them of essential services and too often resulting in dangerous circumstances through alternative heating efforts, for example.

4 <https://naacp.org/resources/engaging-public-utilities-and-public-service-commissions>

5 Report: Low-Income Households, Communities of Color Face High “Energy Burden” Entering Recession | ACEEE

6 Coal Blooded: Putting Profits Before People | NAACP



e. An estimated 68% of African Americans live within 30 miles of a coal fired power plant.

f. Many indigenous communities, for example, in Arizona and New Mexico, are situated adjacent to polluting coal plants, oil refineries, etc., but are also most likely not to have electricity.

g. Women are typically the caretakers for people who are ill, are disproportionately lower income, and are vulnerable to toxins that affect reproductive systems,



Power to the People: The Case for Representational Governance in Public Utilities

Famous Jamaican reggae artist Bob Marley once sang, “Who feels it knows it.” The sentiment in this song lyric is also reflected in the adage, “Those who are closest to the problem are also best able to come up with an effective solution.”

According to Inclusive America,

A government representative of its people is better run, more meritocratic, and helps achieve equity. It creates and implements more inclusive policies and elevates a diverse set of role models. Leaders from diverse backgrounds often develop more creative insights, proffer alternative and comprehensive solutions and thus make decisions that better serve the American people. Diversifying the pool of leaders will allow unique experiences, opinions and perspectives on critical issues and will thus help enhance our government’s ability to serve the needs of its entire population, especially historically disenfranchised communities.

The public will support and abide by these policies when they see people like them making the decisions. They will feel represented and trust that the Federal Government is considering and implementing the necessary steps to fulfill the people’s best interest. No one knows the needs of a community better than the people in it. The inclusion of underrepresented perspectives brings emphasis on addressing issues impacting vulnerable communities which often benefits all of society, socially and economically.⁷

As such, when it comes to PUCs/PSCS, we must ensure that populations that endure high energy burden are robustly represented in these critical decision making bodies. In this case, representational governance is essential to ensuring that planning, design, and solutions around our energy systems are well informed by the people who will be most impacted by our energy infrastructure.



⁷ <https://inclusiveamerica.org/why-diversity-is-important/>

Representational Governance in Action

Below are illustrative examples of representational governance in action. The leaders profiled facilitated community driven solutions to transform their often-overlooked communities' relationship to power, and ensure livable, thriving conditions for all.

"In 1998, **Harold Mitchell Jr.** then State Representative for South Carolina, founded the grass-roots Environmental Justice (EJ) organization, ReGenesis. While suffering his own personal undiagnosed health challenges, Harold discovered that the cumulative impact of abandoned industrial sites and landfills (later designated by EPA as Superfund/Brownfield sites) had caused many of the deaths and chronic illnesses plaguing his family, and the larger Arkwright/Forest Park Community of South Carolina. ReGenesis received a \$20,000 EPA small grant and began conducting a community-led planning process to chart the necessary infrastructure projects needed to repair the history of harm and rebuild the Arkwright and Forest Park communities. Since that inception, ReGenesis has executed a plan of cleanup, redevelopment and revitalization that now serves as a model for meaningful environmental justice. To date, almost \$300 million in federal, state, local, private sector, and philanthropic investments have been leveraged to benefit the community. Harold's story represents hundreds of other communities in America that have suffered, and are currently suffering, from crippling environmental injustices. Now, the ReGenesis Institute is launching its second phase to complete the vision the community outlined while helping expand the ReGenesis Model to lead the Just Transition. In addition, the ReGenesis Institute has launched the first-of-its-kind accelerator for communities like Spartanburg to lead their own development."⁸ according to the ReGenesis Institute website.

"[Utility companies need] to be aware of the hardships that we face so they can create programs that are more accessible to low-income customers. You can't help me if you don't understand my struggles."

- Kiava Stewart, Michigan resident and We Want Green member



Michael Tubbs was the youngest and the first African American mayor of Stockton, CA. He introduced multiple successful initiatives that resonated with the most needful members of his constituency. As part of the privately-funded S.E.E.D. pilot project in Stockton, the city provided a \$500 stipend to 125 selected residents for an 18-month period with "no strings attached" beginning in February, 2019, thanks to the Economic Security Project, an

advocacy group chaired by Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes. The Project provided the first \$1 million for the program, and a dozen other Silicon Valley organizations and private donors who funded the rest of its \$3 million budget. Tubbs helped assemble a national coalition of mayors who support Universal Basic Income (UBI), Mayors for a Guaranteed Income, which had more than 60 participating cities by 2022. During his term, Tubbs also established an intervention program to reduce gun violence, programs to reduce homelessness, and mentorships for at-risk students.⁹

Shirley Chisholm was a member of the New York State Assembly from 1965 to 1968, sitting in the 175th, 176th and 177th New York State Legislatures. By May 1965, she had already been honored in a “Salute to Women Doers” affair in New York. One of her early activities in the Assembly was to argue against the state’s literacy test requiring English, holding that just because a person “functions better in his native language is no sign a person is illiterate”. By early 1966, she was a leader in a push by the statewide Council of Elected Negro Democrats for Black representation on key committees in the Assembly. Her successes in the legislature included getting unemployment benefits extended to domestic workers.^[37] She also sponsored the introduction of a SEEK program (Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge) to the state, which provided disadvantaged students with the chance to enter college while receiving intensive remedial education.¹⁰



THIS is the power of representational governance.

THE WHO: DEMOGRAPHICS AND BACKGROUNDS OF COMMISSIONERS

If WE Aren’t Speaking for Us, Who Is? Shining a Light on the Commissioners

We constructed a database consisting of 197 currently serving PUC commissioners and 205 spots (including eight vacancies) across all 50 PUCs in the US, as of August 29, 2022. For each of these commissioners, we gathered data on their political party, gender, race, educational background, tenure and length of tenure, background/biography, ties to the fossil fuel and/or clean energy industries (if any), whether they hold a legal background, whether they have worked as a lobbyist, or whether they previously served as an elected official. See Appendix B for a condensed version of the database.

When available, this information was gathered from a range of sources, including the commission

9 <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/04/973653719/california-program-giving-500-no-strings-attached-stipends-pays-off-study-finds>

10 Focus On: 100 Most Popular 20th-Century American Polit



website, Ballotpedia, photographs, newspaper articles, and affiliations with affinity-based organizations.

Based on this database we constructed, we generated summary statistics of US public utility commissioners, based on gender, race, education, background, political party, and tenure. Below is a summary of our findings:

Appointed vs. Elected

As previously discussed, some PUCs consist of commissioners who are appointed—typically, by the state’s governor at the time of vacancy. In other cases, commissioners are elected, although this is less common, occurring in roughly a quarter of states. (The majority of commissioners are appointed, with 150 of 197 commissioners who are appointed compared to 47 of 197 commissioners who are elected). Breaking down commissioner data by appointed commissioners versus elected commissioners reveals that these two groups of commissioners are relatively similar across many of the primary parameters considered.

Appointed and elected commissions demonstrate similar degrees of underrepresentation of certain populations. Among 150 appointed and 47 elected commissioners, 36% of appointed commissioners identify as women, compared to 32% of elected ones. The proportion of Black and American Indian commissioners is similar between appointed and elected commissions, although only 2% of appointed commissioners are Hispanic/Latino compared to 6% of elected ones. There are no elected commissioners identifying as Asian currently serving in office, compared to six appointed commissioners who identify as Asian. Both appointed and

elected commissions have progress to make regarding representation on the commissions to reflect the diversity of the populations they serve.

Appointed and elected commissioners also demonstrate differences with regards to their type of previous background and experience. Among appointed commissioners, there is a significantly stronger emphasis on legal backgrounds, with 66, or nearly half, of the 150 appointed commissioners having legal backgrounds, compared to only 15% of elected commissioners. Among elected commissioners, previous service in elected office appears to play a more significant role, with over one-thirds of elected commissioners (or 17 of the 47 elected commissioners) having served in public office prior to their PUC term compared to only one-in-five appointed

"I do not support a rate increase from [the utility company]. I have lived in the city for over a decade and am shocked by the drastic increase in my utility bills, particularly over the last few years and since the pandemic. Prior to 2020 I lived in a 3 bedroom apartment with 2 roommates, since the pandemic I moved into a one bedroom apartment and have been shocked to see my utility bills stay the same or even INCREASE with less people using electricity and gas. I have seen... delivery costs increase consistently and us have no other options to turn to.... NYC summers are getting increasingly warmer and to force New Yorkers to either live in dangerous heat conditions or pay outrageous electric bills to keep cool is unfair."

- Trey Harrington, East Harlem, NYC





commissioners having served in elected office. These results are, perhaps, unsurprising: appointed commissioners are likely appointed by governors for their legal, policy, and regulatory expertise, enhancing the value of having a legal background, while the electoral process for elected PUC commissioners tends to reward the commissioners who have experience navigating electoral politics, particularly at a statewide level.

Additionally, appointed commissioners have, on average, served approximately five years in their current role as commissioners, while elected commissioners have, on average, served roughly eight years as commissioners.

There is also significant political stratification among elected commissioners as well, with 35, or three-in-four, identifying as Republicans compared to 10, or one-in-five, identifying as Democrats. This discrepancy is partially attributable to the political orientation of the states with elected PUCs: most are considered red or Republican states, other than Georgia and Arizona, which are considered purple states.

Gender

Among the 197 PUC commissioners in the database, the significant majority, or 65%, identify as men, with the remaining 35% identifying as women.

Six states (Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Utah) have all-male PUCs.

Race

There is relatively little racial diversity among public utility commissioners in the US. Of the 197 commissioners, 162 (or 82%) identify as White. Only 21 (or 11%) are Black, six (or 3%) are Hispanic/Latino, six (3%) are Asian, and two (or 1%) are Native American/American Indian. This makeup does not reflect the racial diversity of the US as a whole, with 19% of Americans identifying as Hispanic/Latino, 14% identifying as Black, and 6% identifying as Asian, according to the 2021 US Census.¹¹

Furthermore, nearly half of states (24) have PUCs that consist of no commissioners of color. A mere eight states—Arizona, California, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina—have PUCs that are composed of more than one commissioner of color.

In 30 of the states, commissioners who identify as white and male represent the majority vote on the PUC. Four states (Idaho, Maine, Mississippi, Utah.) have 100% white male PUCs.

Race and Gender in the Southeast Region

We took a particularly close examination of the American South, which represents one of the most racially diverse regions in the U.S., yet one of the least racially diverse sets of PUCs. In particular, we examine the PUCs of Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, and Georgia, each of

which hold elections for their respective PUC commissioners. Mississippi, Louisiana, and Georgia have the three highest proportions of Black populations in the country, at approximately 39%, 33%, and 32%, respectively, with Alabama as the sixth-highest in the country at approximately 27%. Yet, there has been minimal diversity of representation among the PUCs. Mississippi has never elected an African American commissioner. Georgia has only had two African American commissioners in its century-long history. Among the PUC commissioners of these four states, 14 of 16 (or 88%) are white, 14 of 16 (or 88%) are men, three-quarters are white men, and only 2 commissioners are Black.

None of the states have a Black female commissioner. And, after a thorough search of publicly available records, we have not been able to find record of there ever being a Black female commissioner in the history of the AL, GA, and MS commissions. In its 80 year history of existence, there has been one black female commissioner in Louisiana, Irma Muse Dixon, who served from 1002-2004. Certainly a woman we would love to meet and to learn about her experience.

The Alabama Public Service Commission and the Mississippi Public Service Commission are all-white commissions, regulating the energy industries of states that have a significant Black population.

Education

Nearly all of the 197 commissioners hold college degrees, with 96% holding Bachelor's degrees and 63% holding advanced graduate degrees, most commonly J.D. and M.A. degrees.

Party

The vast majority of commissioners, roughly 73%, are officially nonpartisan in nature. Among the 53 remaining commissioners, 37 are Republicans, while 16 are Democrats.

Background/Prior Affiliations

PUC commissioners come from a range of backgrounds, including a mixture of legal, regulatory, policy, business, and technical backgrounds. However, experiences in legal roles, in addition to prior service in elected office, are particularly common among elected and appointed commissioners, with 73, or 37%, having legal backgrounds and 47 (25%) having served in an elected official capacity, primarily in their respective state legislatures.

The appointment of some PUCs has previously been controversial due to concerns over "revolving door" circumstances, or ones in which former lobbyists or lawyers come to serve in a capacity in which they then regulate the

"Putting BP in Charge of the Oil Spill Compensation Fund is like putting Dracula in charge of a blood bank."

- Reverend Tyronne Edwards,
Zion Travelers Cooperative

"My bills are already outrageously unaffordable and I am 100% opposed to any proposal that would increase those rates any further. Especially to expand fossil fuel infrastructure which pollutes the environment and harms the health of my neighbors."

- James Armbruster, NYC



same stakeholders they previously worked with and/or for, and vice versa. Within the database, there were at least 13 former lobbyists identified, revealing the potential impact of “revolving door” scenarios.

Tenure

The 197 PUC commissioners have served a range of tenures: roughly half (95) have held their positions for three years or fewer, while nearly one-in-six (31) commissioners have served in their roles for ten years or more, with the remaining 71 commissioners serving between four to nine years in their roles. The average tenure of PUC commissioners is roughly six years, while the median tenure has been four years.

An interesting finding is that term limits do not immediately appear to yield shorter overall tenures. In fact, among PUCs with term limits, the average tenure of commissioners is roughly 6.9 years, while the median tenure is five years. Among PUCs with no term limits of any form, the average tenure of commissioners drops down to 5.5 years, while the median tenure is three years. It is important to note that, given that only five PUCs have term limits, the sample size is relatively small so the results are not necessarily statistically significant.

There is significantly less diversity in the commissioners who have held their position for 10 years or more. Among these 31 commissioners, nearly three-in-four (23 commissioners) are men, while 87% (27 commissioners) are white, with no Hispanic/Latino, Asian, or American Indian commissioners. Meanwhile, for the 95 commissioners who have served for three years or fewer, roughly 35% are women, while nine are Black, six are Hispanic/Latino, four are Asian, and two are American Indian. The majority of such commissioners, or 55%, identify as white and male.

Over time, with more recent commissioners, it is apparent that there has been greater diversity across gender, race, background, and party. However, there is still more work that needs to be done to ensure diverse representation reflecting the makeup of the US population as a whole.

Fossil Fuel Ties

Many commissioners also have previous ties to the fossil fuel industry, a significant influence within the very industry that the commissioners are regulating. This has led to concerns about the impartiality of commissioners and whether these commissioners with backgrounds within the fossil fuel industry have acted in the public interest, including environmental protection and action on addressing climate change. The database constructed captures some of the instances in which public utilities commissioners had particularly prominent ties to the fossil fuel industry. It does not include every instance of a potential fossil fuel industry tie, which would require further analysis. A few examples of the prominent industry ties that we identified are highlighted below:

- **Alaska Regulatory Commission:** Two commissioners serving on the ARC have stated ties to the fossil fuel industry. One previously served as a board member of the Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority, which





has provided government relations services to fossil fuel companies Marathon Oil and Phillips Petroleum. Another served as a chairman of the Alaska Pipeline Commission and as an Assistant Attorney General in Juneau's oil and gas special litigation section.

- **Kansas Corporation Commission:** Two of the commissioners have direct ties to the fossil fuel industry. One has been the co-owner and operations manager of an oil company. The other serves as a representative for the state to the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission.
- **Oklahoma Corporation Commission:** Two of the three commissioners have explicit ties to the fossil fuel industry. One has served as a member of the board of directors for the National Petroleum Council and on an advisory committee with the Gas Technology Institute. Another has owned a law firm focused on oil and gas issues.
- **Texas Public Utilities Commission:** Two of the five commissioners have fossil fuel ties. One has previously worked with an oil and gas exploration and production company. The other has served as a public affairs manager for one of the world's largest petroleum and petrochemical producers.



These are just a few illustrative examples. Many commissions consist of commissioners who have significant ties to the fossil fuel industry. More research should be done to evaluate the impacts of ties to the fossil fuel industry among public utilities commissioners, including the extent to which they have influenced certain decisions.

THE STORIES: ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REPRESENTATIONAL GOVERNANCE AND PUCs

This report has established the critical role that PUCs play in shaping energy regulation and policy. Additionally, there is an eminent, urgent need to overturn legacies of energy and environmental injustice, as well as a meaningful opportunity for historically marginalized communities to benefit from the transition to a fossil free economy. This vision can be achieved through the strategic embedding of equity into state PUCs' energy planning efforts. An important step is ensuring diverse representation on these commissions.

We examine several case studies that illustrate the role that PUCs have played—and can play—with regards to energy equity. In some of these examples, state PUCs were able to advance equity, and in others, state PUCs created further injustices. Some of these situations occurred during the tenure of state PUCs that demonstrated significant diversity in representation among the commissioners with regards to gender and race, while a lack of diversity was apparent in other examples. We examine each of these case studies in further detail throughout this section of the report.



It is important to acknowledge that many factors beyond the diversity (or lack thereof) of a PUC contributed to a given commission outcome. For example, advances in technology and market forces have made the cost of clean energy technologies significantly cheaper, making certain economic arguments in favor of fossil fuel-based technologies less tenable, thereby resulting in better outcomes regardless of commission diversity. In other cases, it appeared



that the political composition of the PUC—as reflected in the political party of the governor doing the appointing—even for officially nonpartisan commissions, played a significant role as well. This report does not attempt to prove causality regarding diversity of representation and positive energy equity outcomes. However, it does attempt to illustrate some examples of how representative government may have played some role in contributing to positive energy equity outcomes and to motivate an understanding of the range of possibilities that may result from having more diverse PUC bodies to improve equity and environmental justice outcomes.

Equity in Action

Diverse representation of commissioners on PUCs has contributed to positive equity outcomes for communities and other stakeholders in many states. Four case studies—spanning Arizona, Michigan, New Mexico, and Wisconsin—are considered. In some of these states, prior to the appointment or election of commissioners representing diverse backgrounds or perspectives, the PUCs had been making decisions that often yielded inequitable outcomes, a trend that was reversed after there was greater diversity on the commission. In other states, the PUCs had already been making progress on advancing equity through their decisions and diverse representation only served to reinforce or accelerate some of these efforts.

Arizona

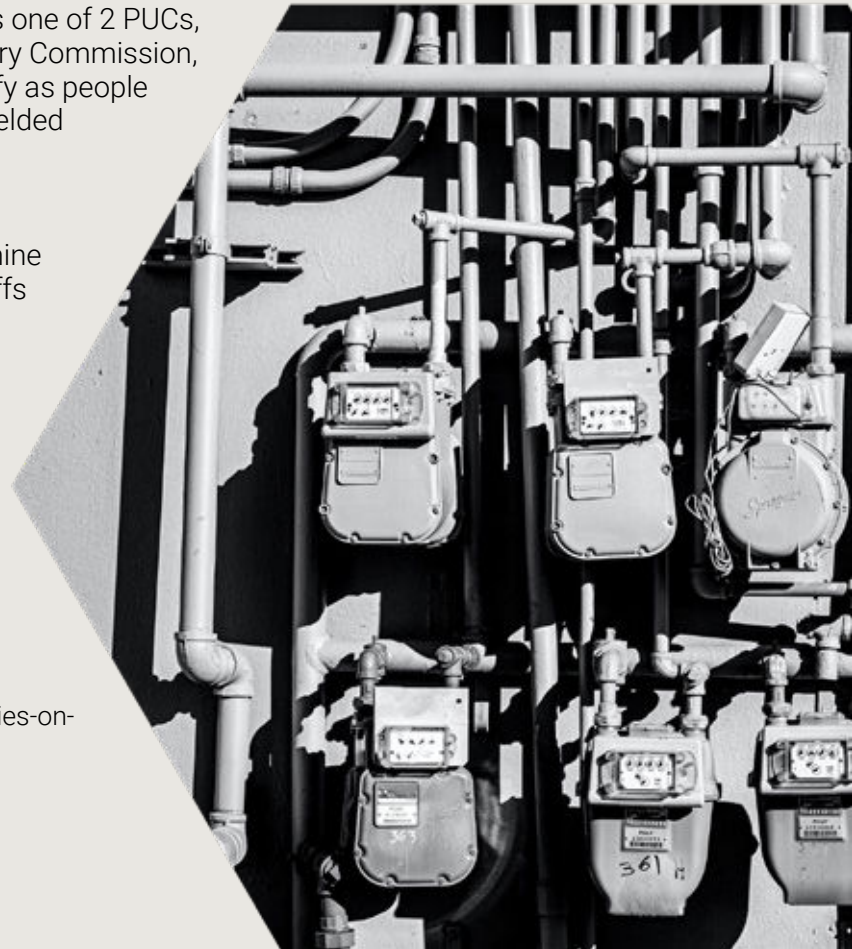
The Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) is one of 2 PUCs, in addition to the New Mexico Public Regulatory Commission, in which the majority of commissioners identify as people of color. This diversity in representation has yielded important wins on energy equity for the state.

Prior to 2019, Arizona utility companies used National Weather Service advisories to determine whether utilities could announce power shutoffs based on a 95 degree temperature threshold. However, Commissioner Sandra Kennedy, a commissioner of color, argued that the temperature threshold was too high and that a 90 degree threshold was safer and would result in fewer heat-related deaths.¹² In 2021, the ACC voted 3-2 in support of

“The real question is do we really want to have the blood of those individuals who die on our hands? Do the utility companies want to have the blood of those individuals who die on their hands?”

- Arizona Commissioner Sandra Kennedy

12 <https://www.azmirror.com/2021/04/26/corporation-commission-votes-to-strengthen-policies-on-power-disconnection/>

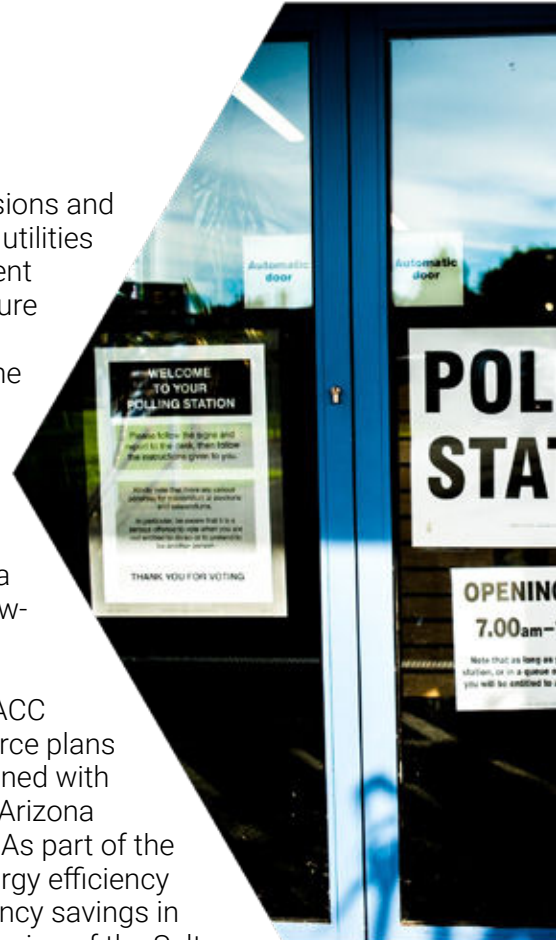




taking measures to mitigate challenges around utility service suspensions and disconnections. It approved a “package of measures regulating when utilities can shut off service for nonpayment.” This decision followed an incident in which a 72 year old Arizona resident died from extreme heat exposure and cardiovascular disease following the service disconnection from utility Arizona Public Service—after owing just \$51 on her utility bill. The three commissioners who voted to approve the measure were the three commissioners of color on the ACC, including one Republican-appointed commissioner, while the other two commissioners, who did not identify as commissioners of color, dissented. The ACC also voted to ban disconnections for customers who owed less than \$300 for electricity and \$100 for natural gas, in addition to approving a measure that would facilitate the development of solar projects for low-income multifamily housing.

Arizona’s clean energy wins did not stop there. In February 2022, the ACC issued a decision that resulted in the modification of integrated resource plans (IRP), which are assessments of a utility’s future electric needs combined with a strategic roadmap for meeting these objectives, for electric utilities Arizona Public Service, Tucson Electric Power, and UNS Energy Corporation.¹³ As part of the approval process, the ACC required those utilities to achieve 1.3% energy efficiency savings annually over the next three years and to report energy efficiency savings in their next IRPs. And in April 2022, the ACC voted 4-1 to reject an expansion of the Salt River Project’s gas-fired Coolidge Generating Station, a project that would have continued to “pollute surrounding communities, like the nearby historically Black neighborhood of Randolph, exacerbate the climate crisis, and raise costs for customers.”¹⁴ Advocates cited the decision as a significant win for environmental justice. These decisions coincide with a period in which 3 out of 5 ACC members, including the Chairwoman, identify as people of color.

There are, however, important lingering concerns with regards to the ACC. For example, the ACC significantly reduced the funding the state would give the Navajo and Hopi tribes and rural communities in the wake of coal plant and mine closures.¹⁵ Furthermore, in a high profile docket, the ACC voted down a proposal to require energy producers to achieve 100% carbon-free energy by 2050.¹⁶ This was a 3-2 vote to end the proposal. The two “no” votes were both women of color: Commissioners Tovar, a Latina, and Kennedy. The Commission Chair, Lea Marquez Peterson, a Republican (also a Latina woman), flipped her vote to abolish the 100% carbon-free energy rules. The two other votes to eliminate the rules were white men. One, Commissioner



¹³ <https://database.aceee.org/state/energy-efficiency-resource-standards>

¹⁴ <https://www.sierraclub.org/press-releases/2022/04/arizona-corporation-commission-rejects-gas-plant-expansion-prioritizing-clean>

¹⁵ <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/arizona/articles/2021-11-03/tribal-groups-arizona-corp-commission-giving-token-funding>

¹⁶ <https://www.publicnewsservice.org/2022-01-28/energy-policy/regulatory-no-vote-sends-az-back-to-square-one-on-clean-energy-plan/a77625-1>



O'Connor, was set to vote for the rules—having been effectively persuaded by Tovar—but ultimately succumbed to pressure from conservative interest groups.

This example shows both the power of representation and also its limits, particularly when it comes up against partisanship in a state with an elected commission.

This proposal would have brought significant relief to communities that have borne the brunt of pollution and other adverse health impacts resulting from fossil fuel-based generation. A new regulatory commitment has yet to be announced.

Regardless, the ACC's demonstrated progress on advancing positive equity outcomes through energy regulation is, in no small part, attributable to the commission's diversity, which is reflective of Arizona's diversity as a whole.

Michigan

In 2019, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer appointed Tremaine Phillips to serve on the Michigan Public Service Commission (PSC), becoming the only person of color presently serving on the commission.

In the past few years, following Commissioner Phillips' appointment, coupled with the engagement of a powerful frontline grassroots surge of effort, there have been several wins for equity and environmental justice in Michigan.

In August 2020, the Michigan PSC opened a docket to seek input on methods for incorporating environmental justice and public health into utility energy planning.^{17 18} This measure was taken to mitigate concerns around the disproportionate health impacts, energy burdens, energy efficiency disparities, extreme heat exposures, and other adverse climate and health outcomes for Michigan's most vulnerable communities, including its low-income communities and communities of color.

In November 2021, the Michigan Public Service Commission (PSC) ruled that the Ohio Valley Electric Corporation (OVEC) contract costs Indiana and Michigan Power (I&M, an AEP subsidiary) sought to charge Michigan customers are likely to be disallowed in all future proceedings. Michigan customers will no longer have to pay I&M's OVEC costs that exceed the market value of OVEC power. The effect of the ruling will save Michigan customers tens of millions of dollars each year, which costs will be borne by AEP shareholders instead.¹⁹

"Energy is a life necessity. We should be making sure NO ONE has to be shut off."

- Kiava Stewart, Michigan resident and Soulardarity member

¹⁷ <https://planetdetroit.org/2021/05/mpsc-considers-how-to-account-for-the-inequitable-public-health-costs-of-future-electricity-generation/>

¹⁸ https://energynews.us/2021/05/12/michigan_regulator_utilities_health_inequities/

¹⁹ Michigan Public Service Commission Warns AEP That It Will Limit Costs to Customers for Uneconomic Coal Plants | Sierra Club

In February 2022, the Michigan PSC established a new Equity and Inclusion Officer position, taking steps to improve diversity and inclusion efforts internally.²⁰ In March 2022, the Michigan PSC approved a settlement agreement between Consumers Energy and a coalition of advocacy groups that expanded energy efficiency programs to assist Michigan communities with the highest energy burdens.²¹ And in June 2022, the Michigan PSC approved utility Consumers Energy's plan that called for transitioning away from coal and natural gas towards renewable energy.²²

These outcomes directly contrast with previous decisions that the Michigan PSC has been responsible for making. For instance, in 2018, environmental groups filed an appeal to reverse a previous Michigan PSC decision that authorized a \$1 billion gas power plant project, resulting in a customer rate hike that disproportionately hurts low-income residents.²³

New Mexico

The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (PRC) is one of the nation's most diverse. Of its five members, two identify as women and two identify as individuals of color, including Commissioner Joseph Maestas, who is Hispanic/Latino, and Theresa Becenti-Aguilar, who is American Indian, both of whom New Mexicans elected into office.

Prior to the elections of Commissioners Maestas and Becenti-Aguilar, the New Mexico PRC engaged in several decisions that yielded inequitable energy outcomes for New Mexican residents. For example, in 2015, the New Mexico PRC approved a plan on a 4-1 vote to continue operating the San Juan Generating Station, a coal-fired power plant.²⁴ The decision was viewed by many as a compromise to bring the coal plant into compliance with federal regulations, but nonetheless generated concerns over the continued operations of a coal power plant rather than investments in renewable energy. There were additional concerns from residents about potential negative impacts for ratepayers.

In 2010, former New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson appointed Commissioner Becenti-Aguilar to serve on the New Mexico PRC, before she was officially elected later that year to serve a full term. Commissioner Becenti-Aguilar was then reelected in 2018 to serve another term, while Commissioner Maestas was elected in 2020 to serve on the New Mexico PRC.

Since Commissioners Becenti-Aguilar and Maestas have joined the New Mexico PRC, the state has witnessed a series of clean energy and climate



²⁰ <https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/commission/news-releases/2022/02/07/mpsc-names-shatina-jones-as-agencys-first-ever-equity-and-inclusion-officer>

²¹ <https://www.sierraclub.org/press-releases/2022/01/settlement-agreement-between-dte-and-advocates-delivers-energy-efficiency>

²² <https://www.nrdc.org/media/2022/220623>

²³ <https://www.monroenews.com/story/news/environment/2018/06/01/environmentalists-challenge-dte-gas-plant/12081811007/>

²⁴ <https://www.daily-times.com/story/news/local/four-corners/2015/12/16/prc-approves-san-juan-generating-station-plan/77368644/>

victories. In 2020, prior to Commissioner Maestas officially joining the commission, the New Mexico PRC voted to replace the San Juan Generating Station coal power plant, a decision that Commissioner Becenti-Aguilar voted in favor of.²⁵ Advocates cited this ruling as an important decision to combat climate change while creating strong benefits for affected communities. Then in 2021, the commission voted unanimously to deny utility El Paso Electric's application to extend one of its fossil fuel generating stations.²⁶ Additionally, in 2021, the New Mexico PRC approved plans among the state's utilities that would result in over \$11 million in investment in electric vehicle infrastructure and education programs, particularly in underserved areas. And in 2022, the New Mexico PRC completed a community solar rulemaking process, adopting a new rule that supports community solar with a focus on low-income customers and social equity, an effort led by Commissioner Maestas.²⁷

Communities and environmental justice advocates have hailed these victories as important climate wins. For example, Joseph Hernandez, a member of the Native American group NAVA Education Program, claimed that the New Mexico PRC's decision to invest in clean energy "will transform our communities" and result in "new investments in our school district, hundreds of jobs for tribal families, and economic transition at a time when we need it more than ever."²⁸

It is important to note that, in 2020, New Mexican residents voted to change the New Mexico PRC from an elected commission back to an appointed commission.²⁹ This structural shift was, in part, the result of an apparent alignment between some environmental advocacy groups and utilities, who were attempting to rein in a commission perceived as "activist." Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham has yet to announce the first set of appointments, but has established a nominating committee.³⁰ The jury is out regarding whether the newly appointed New Mexico PRC will still represent the New Mexican public. Moving forward, the New Mexico PRC will be an interesting case study to keep a close eye on regarding the equity and environmental justice implications of appointed and elected PUCs.

Wisconsin

In 2014, the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) voted 2-1 to approve a significant increase in fixed charges for electric customers of Green Bay-based utility Wisconsin Public Service Corp., which had requested a 140% increase.³¹ The Wisconsin PSC ultimately approved an 83% increase in the monthly fixed charge rate from \$10.40 to \$19.³² Commissioner Ellen Nowak and Commissioner Phil Montgomery, both of whom were appointed under Republican Governor Scott Walker's administration, voted in favor of the proposal. The pattern continued, with the Wisconsin PSC approving further rate increases multiple times over the next few years, in addition to several similar decisions being made for other utilities proposing rate hikes for

25 <https://westernlaw.org/new-mexico-prc-embraces-100-renewable-future-four-corners/>

26 <https://earthjustice.org/cases/2016/defending-new-mexico-solar-customers>

27 <https://abq.news/2022/03/new-mexicos-community-solar-rule-adopted-by-the-prc/>

28 <https://www.eenews.net/articles/n-m-shuns-gas-chooses-renewables-to-replace-coal/>

29 [daily-times.com/story/news/2020/11/06/2020-election-results-new-mexico-voters-prc-reform-ballot-measure/6124969002/](https://www.daily-times.com/story/news/2020/11/06/2020-election-results-new-mexico-voters-prc-reform-ballot-measure/6124969002/)

30 <https://www.governor.state.nm.us/2022/06/30/governor-state-agencies-announce-appointments-to-prc-nominating-committee/>

31 <https://energynews.us/2014/11/11/wisconsin-fixed-charge-decision-a-sign-of-more-to-come/>

32 <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/wisc-regulators-approve-83-jump-in-fixed-charges/330289/>

Wisconsin electric customers.

Opponents stated that the decision would penalize low-use customers, discouraging energy efficiency measures and investments in rooftop solar and other forms of distributed energy generation. Policy experts argued that the rate hike would “effectively demolish” rooftop solar in Wisconsin, particularly for small customers. The decision, in effect, served to prolong the use of coal, which accounted for nearly 51% of the state’s electric power generation in 2014, and natural gas, which accounted for 18%, in addition to other fossil fuel assets.³³ The Citizen Utility Board also found that the Wisconsin PSC’s decision “discourages energy savings and hurts low- and fixed-income households.”

Research has thoroughly documented the disproportionate impacts of utility rate increases on low-income customers, who are hit the hardest by these price hikes.³⁴

³⁵ It has also extensively analyzed the ways in which fossil fuel generation hits low-income communities and communities of color the hardest. In Wisconsin, this issue is particularly harmful, as several studies have illustrated significant energy burdens for low-income communities and communities of color throughout Wisconsin, particularly in Milwaukee, which is the state’s largest city.^{36 37}

However, in 2019, Commissioner Rebecca Valcq, a Hispanic/Latina commissioner, was appointed by Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers to serve on the commission.³⁸ With the appointment of Commissioner Valcq, the Wisconsin PSC flipped to a 2-1 majority of Democrat-appointed commissioners. In 2021, in a rate settlement filed with the Wisconsin PSC, Madison Gas & Electric agreed to a settlement that resulted in \$2 million in annual savings for electric customers, in addition to lower monthly fixed fees. It also led to other positive impacts, including a pilot program for low-income customers be provided free thermostats in addition to further savings achieved through the utility’s demand response program.³⁹ Furthermore, the Wisconsin PSC began initiating a roadmap to make progress towards the Governor’s commitment for the state to achieve zero-carbon electricity,

33 <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2015/05/f22/WI-Energy%20Sector%20Risk%20Profile.pdf>

34 <https://www.aceee.org/press-release/2020/09/report-low-income-households-communities-color-face-high-energy-burden>

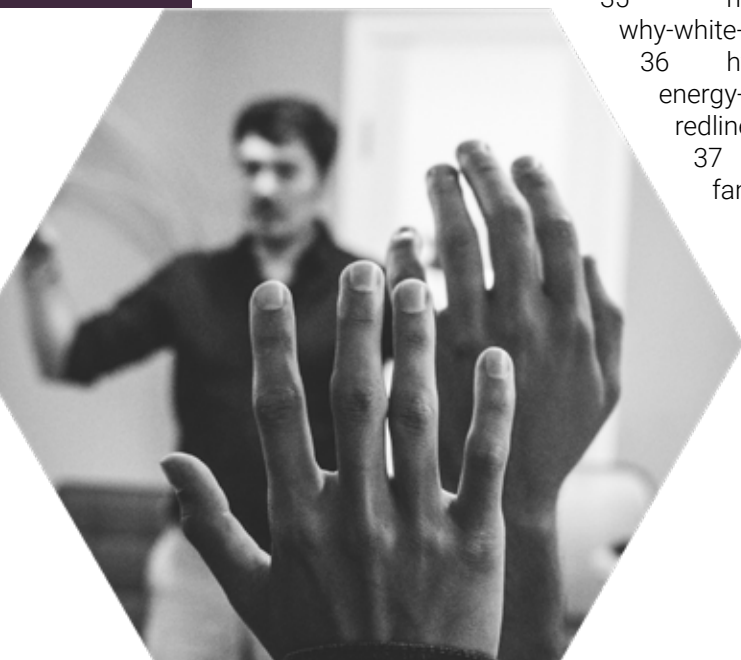
35 <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-11-25/why-white-households-pay-less-for-utilities?sref=ubpFo2VP>

36 <https://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/blog/2021/04/energy-burden-milwaukee-study-reveals-major-disparities-links-redlined-areas>

37 <https://energynews.us/2021/04/09/black-latinx-families-bear-the-energy-burden-in-milwaukee-study-finds/>

38 <https://energynews.us/2019/03/12/clean-energy-advocates-hopeful-about-changing-of-guard-at-wisconsin-psc/>

39 <https://cubwi.org/mge-settlement-clear-wins-for-customers-include-4-drop-in-fixed-fee-2-million-in-savings/>



seeking input on energy efficiency programs for low-income customers, organizing workshops on performance-based regulation for equity-oriented clean energy planning, and requiring utilities to file workforce and supplier diversity data.⁴⁰

Not all decisions with the new makeup of the Wisconsin PSC have been in favor of advancing equity. For example, the commission approved a \$370 million natural gas plant in 2021 that will likely result in prolonged exposure to fossil fuel-based pollution for Wisconsin's most vulnerable communities.⁴¹ Additionally, the jury is still out on the equity-based implications of dockets that are pending or have yet to be announced—perhaps few as closely tracked as a potential ruling on the legalities of third-party solar in Wisconsin.^{44 45}

Regardless, there is a clear demonstration of improvement regarding equity outcomes of Wisconsin PSC's energy decisions. Commissioner Valcq's appointment as a Hispanic/Latina commissioner has only accelerated this progress.

Commissioner Valcq's appointment initially received pushback from some stakeholder groups concerned over whether she would serve as an impartial commissioner given her previous legal background defending the same utilities that she would now regulate in her role as PSC commissioner.⁴⁶ Previously, Commissioner Valcq spent over a decade working as an attorney for We Energies, often appearing before the Wisconsin PSC in various cases. Yet, she has often proved to be the decisive voice on issues of climate action and energy equity, particularly as the only commissioner of color on the three-person Wisconsin PSC.

Commissioner Valcq's service on the PSC demonstrates that not all circumstances involving "revolving door" type appearances are inherently unproductive or detrimental to certain equity outcomes. In certain instances, these commissioners can more effectively serve to better the

40 <https://www.renewwisconsin.org/the-pscs-zero-carbon-roadmap-first-steps-on-a-path-to-a-clean-grid/>

41 https://madison.com/news/local/environment/regulators-approve-370m-natural-gas-storage-project-despite-concerns-of-fossil-fuel-investment/article_024bd604-9586-5620-ad58-4fdad99e526f.html

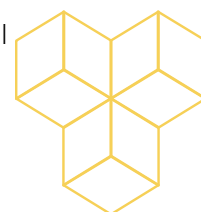
42 <https://upnorthnewswi.com/2021/11/05/state-approves-construction-of-370-million-natural-gas-facility-despite-local-climate-objections/>

43 <https://www.jsonline.com/story/money/2022/03/31/new-wausau-area-power-plant-criticized-unnecessary-wins-approval/7228986001/>

44 <https://energynews.us/newsletter/clean-energy-groups-seek-third-party-solar-financing-in-wisconsin/>

45 <https://www.jsonline.com/story/money/business/2022/07/22/wisconsin-utility-regulators-agree-hear-testimony-solar-projects/10127124002/>

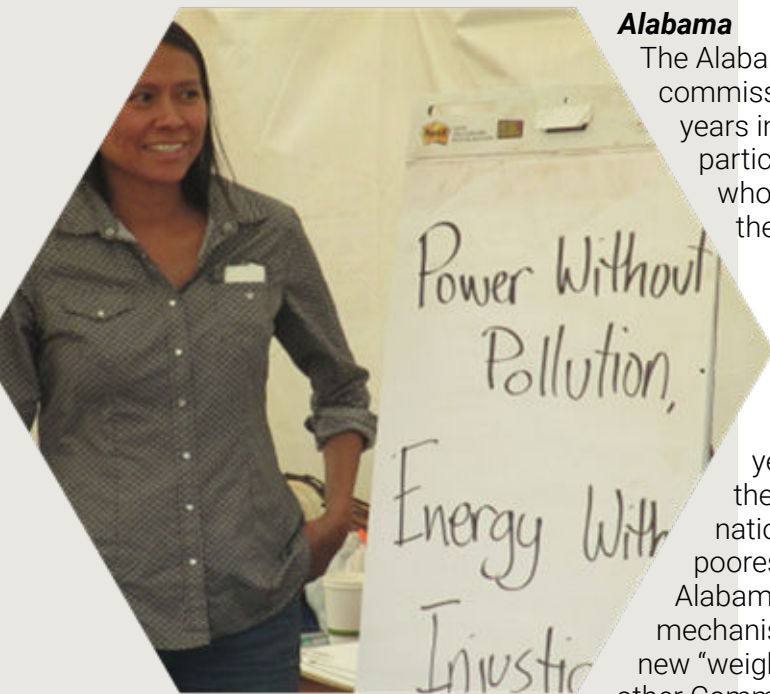
46 https://madison.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/despite-industry-ties-wisconsins-top-utility-regulator-vows-independence-public-involvement/article_497257a6-2243-5a07-bfb6-3a2c951ea7a8.html



public interest through a greater understanding of the often competing constraints and tradeoffs that affected stakeholders must confront.

Equity—Missing in Action (MIA)

The majority of PUCs still have little diversity and have demonstrated little to no focus on equity and environmental justice. Several case studies illustrate these concerns.



Alabama

The Alabama PSC currently consists of three white commissioners, each of whom has served at least seven years in their current roles. The PSC's decisions have been particularly harmful for low-income ratepayers, many of whom are Black given the state's 27% Black population, the sixth-highest in the US.

According to an Energy and Policy Institute report, the state's largest utility Alabama Power received over \$1 billion in profits in excess of the industry average between 2014-2018, equivalent to \$700 per Alabama Power customer over those five years.⁴⁷ The Alabama PSC has approved some of the largest returns on investments (profits) in the nation for the utility, despite the state being the sixth-poorest according to the U.S. Census. Meanwhile, the Alabama PSC has used novel accounting and calculation mechanisms to conceal this fact to the public, applying a new "weighted retail return on common equity" metric that no other Commission had been using.

A Brown University Climate and Development Lab report has generated similar conclusions, labeling the Alabama PSC "one of the most opaque, politically motivated, and environmentally hostile commissions in the country." In particular, the report notes that "weak transparency rules" allow the PSC's regulatory decision making to "occur privately between commission officials and Alabama Power."⁴⁸

The lack of diverse representation on the Alabama PSC has resulted in particularly egregious energy equity outcomes for the state, which suffers some of the nation's worst low-income energy burdens at over 10% of low-income ratepayers' income.⁴⁹

47 <https://www.energyandpolicy.org/alabama-power-earned-1-billion-in-profits-over-industry-average-on-the-backs-of-customers-since-2014/>

48 http://www.climatedevlab.brown.edu/uploads/2/8/4/0/28401609/2021_cdl_pucs_report.pdf

49 https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2019/01/f58/WIP-Energy-Burden_final.pdf

Georgia

The Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) has been one of the least diverse in the nation. Georgia has only had one Black commissioner serve on the PSC, who was appointed by the Governor; it has never elected a Black commissioner to serve on its PSC. Currently, the Georgia PSC consists of four white commissioners and one Black commissioner. This persistent lack of representation of historically underrepresented populations on the Georgia PSC remains a significant problem for energy equity.

This lack of representation is not entirely a coincidence. Recent judicial rulings have suggested concerns over how Georgia has handled PUC elections. In 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a federal court ruling that Georgia's PSC elections constituted illegal discrimination against Black people and violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act by diluting the votes of Black voters.^{50 51} Although the Georgia PSC elections are statewide, the candidates must come from five separate districts based on their place of residence.

The Georgia PSC has produced a slew of decisions that have failed to alleviate energy inequities and energy burdens for the state's most vulnerable residents. In particular, the Georgia PSC has done little to protect customers from utility shutoffs during the COVID-19 pandemic, even during peak summer months with rising temperatures.⁵² While advocacy groups and commenters urged the Georgia PSC to consider a range of measures to protect consumers including debt forgiveness for certain income-qualifying customers and working with the state's largest utility Georgia Power to minimize grid disconnections, the Georgia PSC did not meaningfully adopt these measures, exacerbating the state's public health crisis.

The Georgia PSC has also regularly approved inequitable rate structures that have resulted in significant profits for Georgia Power at the expense of ratepayers.⁵³ For example, in 2019, the Georgia PSC approved a plan that would result in a \$175 average increase for residential customers despite the utility's significant reliance on coal power, a decision that consumer, environmental, and clean energy groups opposed. Even the Georgia PSC staff opposed such decisions "on a number of fronts, from ratepayers having to cover bonuses for Georgia Power executives, to profits that staff said were higher than necessary for the company to keep a healthy credit rating," as the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reports.⁵⁴ Additionally, the well-documented financial disasters of the Plant Vogtle nuclear power plant have resulted in adverse ratepayer impacts that have disproportionately harmed low-income ratepayers.⁵⁵

50 <https://www.wabe.org/georgia-psc-elections-again-delayed-after-us-supreme-court-ruling/>

51 <https://www.democracydocket.com/news-alerts/u-s-supreme-court-vacates-11th-circuit-ruling-on-georgias-public-service-commission-elections/>

52 <https://www.southernenvironment.org/news/georgia-public-service-commission-fails-to-protect-customers-from-utility-shut-offs/>

53 <https://www.ajc.com/news/breaking-news/georgia-power-electric-bills-increase-starting-january/vMGkUZtjXb3rNcyVZvMNJ/>

54 <https://www.ajc.com/news/breaking-news/georgia-power-electric-bills-increase-starting-january/vMGkUZtjXb3rNcyVZvMNJ/>

55 <https://apnews.com/article/business-environment-and-nature-georgia-90bbe5cc8e3a1a6077b9e4318e2bbf7e>



Ohio

The Ohio Public Utility Commission (PUCO) has been embroiled in scandal in the recent past, representing one of the most high-profile cases of bribery and corruption in state-level government with regards to energy policy. In 2019, the Republican-controlled Ohio state legislature passed HB 6, which some analysts regarded as the “worst energy bill of the 21st century.”⁵⁶ In summary, the bill bailed out two nuclear plants and two coal plants, dramatically reduced renewable energy standards and energy efficiency standards, and was the product of an extensive network of corruption. Within a year, the former Ohio House Speaker was arrested as part of the \$60 million corruption scandal; the utility behind the scandal, FirstEnergy, also admitted that it made a bribe, a payment of \$4.3 million to the chair of the Ohio PUC Sam Randazzo, and also paid him millions in preceding years in consulting fees.⁵⁷

Currently, the PUCO does not consist of a single commissioner of color. Two of PUCO’s commissioners, specifically Commissioner Daniel Conway and Commissioner Lawrence Friedeman, have industry ties. Commissioner Conway represented electric and natural gas utilities before PUCO, while Commissioner Friedeman has served on the boards of the Ohio Gas Association and the Ohio Gas Suppliers Association. Advocacy groups have slammed the reappointment of Commissioner Conway onto PUCO due to his utility ties and his neglect in protecting utility customers.^{58 59} The other candidates were not much better in this regard, as all four shortlisted candidates for the then-vacant PUCO commissioner spot had utility ties.⁶⁰ Groups have even labeled PUCO a “shell for Ohio’s regulated, investor-owned utility companies.”^{61 62}

Ohio’s utilities have also demonstrated a poor track record with regards to utility shutoffs for non-payment of electricity bills, particularly for the state’s most vulnerable residents. Advocacy groups have identified utility shutoffs as one of the most damaging actions with regards to energy equity, leaving residents stranded and without heating or cooling in times of extreme weather conditions, particularly during the pandemic. An analysis from Energy and Policy Institute found in 2021 that four major Ohio utilities disconnected electricity service over 200,000 times

56 <https://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment/2019/7/27/8910804/ohio-gop-nuclear-coal-plants-renewables-efficiency-hb6>

57 <https://energynews.us/2022/08/08/regulators-foot-dragging-on-public-records-hides-the-full-story-behind-ohios-utility-corruption-scandal/>

58 <https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2022/03/07/dewine-reappoints-utility-commissioner-who-didnt-do-much-to-protect-firstenergy-customers/>

59 <https://www.cleveland.com/news/2022/02/gov-mike-dewine-reappoints-utilities-lawyer-to-public-utilities-commission-of-ohio.html>

60 <https://darik.news/ohio/democrats-use-hb-6-scandal-to-criticize-dewine-over-puco-commissioners-re-appointment/510741.html>

61 <https://www.ohiocitizen.org/ohioans-deserve-an-end-to-puco-shell-game>

62 <https://www.commoncause.org/ohio/page/connecting-the-dots-first-energy-political-profits-and-utility-policy/>





during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶³ Reports have well documented the disproportionate impacts of utility shutoffs on low-income communities and communities of color.⁶⁴ At the same time, these households pay a disproportionate share of their income on electricity bills.⁶⁵ The PUCO did little to address these concerns around utility disconnections, dismissing a plea from consumer advocates to initiate further investigations.⁶⁶

PUCO's poor track record on energy equity and environmental justice reveals deeper systemic issues regarding the state's approach to energy planning. Having little to no diversity on the state's energy commission does little to help the state address the concerns of its most vulnerable residents.

West Virginia

Few states are more associated with coal production than West Virginia. The West Virginia Public Service Commission (PSC) is no different, with several commissioners maintaining direct ties to the coal industry. Currently, the three-seat West Virginia PSC consists of no commissioners of color.

One of the West Virginia PSC commissioners previously served as CEO of the West Virginia Coal Association. Naturally, the state's energy regulatory commission has been particularly favorable towards coal generation. In 2021, the West Virginia PSC approved continued operation of three coal power plants managed by American Electric Power Co. (AEP) through 2040.⁶⁷ After receiving petitions for appeal, the commission doubled down on this decision, arguing that "prematurely shutting down used and useful power plants with many years of remaining life would require billions of dollars in replacement costs that would be in addition to continuing recovery of unrecovered costs already expended on those power plants," a plan that the PSC has considered "unreasonable and imprudent" that would result in significant increases in energy imports for the state.⁶⁸

The commission has demonstrated some progress with regards to clean energy and energy efficiency solutions that would improve environmental and public health outcomes for West Virginia's poorest and most vulnerable communities. For instance, in 2021, the West Virginia PSC approved a plan consisting of an annual \$3.75 million investment to expand the state's energy efficiency programs for utilities Appalachian Power Company and Wheeling Power Company, which surpassed the utilities' initial proposal of a \$900,000 investment. Additionally, in 2022, the West Virginia PSC established a task force to consider how the state could lower energy costs. However, some advocacy and environmental groups still found the task force troubling, as the

63 <https://www.energyandpolicy.org/ohio-utility-disconnections-covid-19/>

64 https://www.all4energy.org/uploads/1/0/5/6/105637723/lights-out-in-the-cold_naacp-ecjp-4.pdf

65 <https://www.aceee.org/press-release/2020/09/report-low-income-households-communities-color-face-high-energy-burden>

66 <https://energynews.us/2022/01/07/ohio-regulators-dismiss-pleas-to-investigate-utility-power-shutoffs/>

67 <https://www.powermag.com/west-virginia-psc-approves-continued-operation-of-three-aep-coal-power-plants-through-2040/>

68 <https://www.theintermountain.com/news/local-news/2022/07/psc-stands-firm-on-power-plant-decision/>

coal industry, utilities, and fossil fuel lawyers comprise a portion of the task force.⁶⁹

"This is shameful to allow a monopoly to be more concerned about the shareholders and company profits over the public health. [The water company is] driving all costs of goods to go up! STOP, you all make enough profits!!"

- Diane Gibeau, California resident

Although market forces will continue to improve the economic favorability of renewable energy projects—a trend that the West Virginia PSC is aware of given approvals to various utility-scale solar projects⁷⁰—an equity-based approach to energy policy and regulation remains a difficult proposition in West Virginia, which is partially attributable to a lack of diversity on the commission itself.

The Mixed Bag—Complexities and Nuances in the PUCs

There have also been several examples of state PUCs that have demonstrated a mixed record with regards to energy equity and environmental justice. There are case studies in which diverse PUCs yielded outcomes that did not necessarily improve equity for vulnerable populations. There are also other examples in which non-diverse PUCs achieved positive success with regards to equity. And there are some situations in which a given commission's track record on equity is conflicting, with significant gray area. These examples illustrate the complexities of energy policymaking and regulation, including the range of tradeoffs, considerations, and competing objectives that regulators are forced to contend with in state energy planning.

Kansas

The Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) does not currently have any commissioners of color. Additionally, of the three commissioners, two have ties to the fossil fuel industry, including Commissioner Dwight Keen, who was the co-owner and operations manager for an oil company, and Commissioner Susan Duffy, who was a representative to the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission.

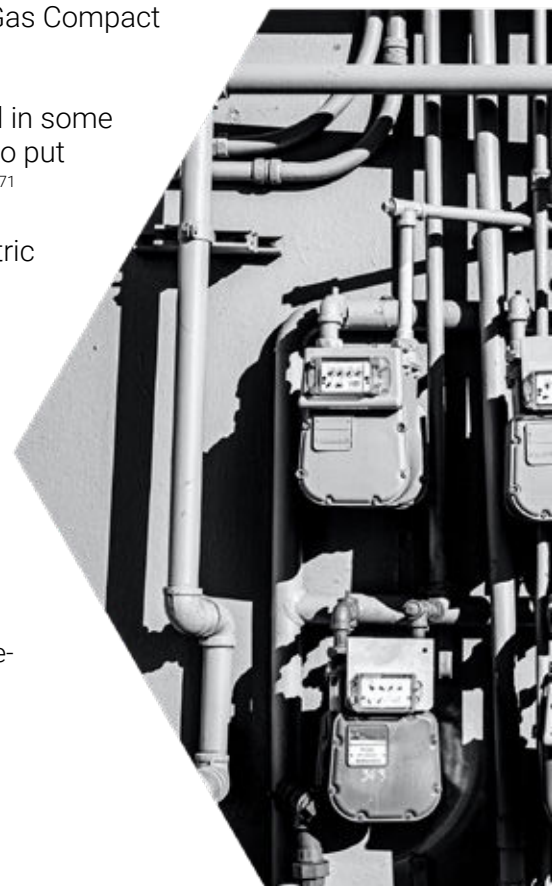
The commissioners' ties to the fossil fuel industry have been reflected in some of KCC's decisions. In 2022, KCC approved a natural gas utility's plan to put ratepayers on the hook for \$366 million following a deep freeze event.⁷¹

However, they did previously vote to lower rates for utility Empire Electric customers and have supported expansion of "truth-in-billing" rules to

69 https://www.coalvalleynews.com/news/public-service-commission-appoints-task-force-to-consider-how-to-lower-energy-costs/article_44587457-8cf0-54be-8500-41c97c7cb841.html

70 https://www.herald-dispatch.com/business/west-virginia-psc-approves-appalachian-power-s-berkeley-county-utility-scale-solar-project/article_6ec0d6d1-43f1-5c3e-9f2b-a8c0a1520822.html

71 <https://kansasreflector.com/2022/02/08/kansas-regulators-approve-natural-gas-utilitys-plan-to-recoup-366-million-from-customers/>



protect consumers.⁷²

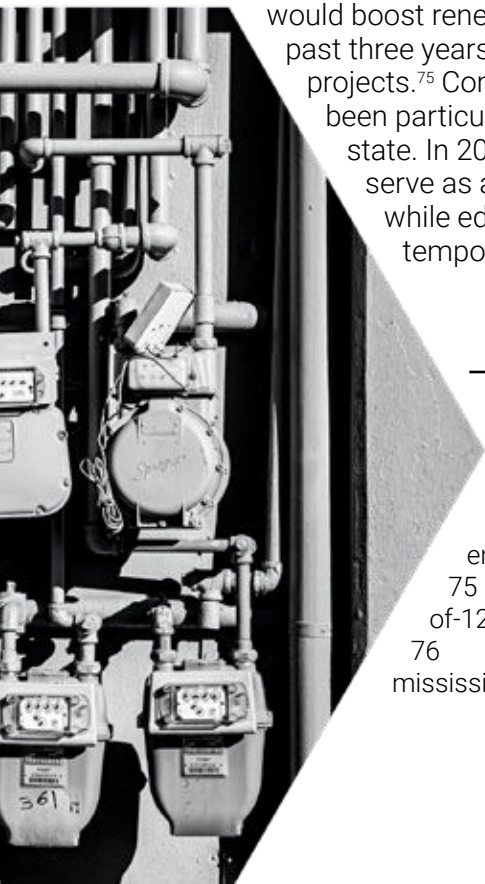
Mississippi

The Mississippi Public Service Commission (PSC) has historically been one of the least diverse PUCs. Currently, it is composed of three white commissioners and it has never had a Black commissioner in its history, despite serving a state that has the highest proportion of Black residents at 38%. Energy burden remains a significant challenge for the state, as it ranks worst among all 50 states in terms of low-income energy burden, with upwards of 12% of low-income residents' incomes going towards electricity bills.⁷³ Neighboring states also suffer from poor energy burdens, in part due to high energy consumption due to electricity for heating and air conditioning given the region's climate.



The Mississippi PSC has also insufficiently progressed the state's energy resources from fossil fuels to clean energy. The well-documented fiasco surrounding the demise and failure of the \$7.5 billion Kemper power plant, which promised to demonstrate the potential of "clean coal" technology, highlights some of the questionable decision making from the Mississippi PSC. The plant would have theoretically used lignite coal to generate electricity with lower emissions compared to other fossil fuels, yet ultimately encountered budget overruns and missed construction milestones, eventually resulting in the project's abandonment. Meanwhile, the Mississippi PSC provided insufficient oversight from the project's start.

Yet, the Mississippi PSC has still taken some measures to address concerns around energy burden and energy efficiency, albeit perhaps with insufficient urgency. In 2019, the Mississippi PSC took an unprecedented measure to create a long-term energy planning process that would boost renewable power and would incorporate greater energy efficiency.⁷⁴ Over the past three years, the Mississippi PSC has also approved \$1.4 billion in solar and wind projects.⁷⁵ Commissioner Brandon Presley, the lone Democrat on the Commission, has been particularly outspoken on the importance of energy efficiency measures for the state. In 2022, the Mississippi PSC also announced Operation Bill Assist, which would serve as a \$3.2 million project to promote energy efficiency and offer bill assistance while educating customers.⁷⁶ The bill would include a \$1.1 million fund to provide temporarily bill payment assistance for Mississippi customers, including a



⁷² <https://kcc.ks.gov/commission-activity/news-releases/2020/38-2020-news-releases/490-news-2-6-20>

⁷³ https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2019/01/f58/WIP-Energy-Burden_final.pdf

⁷⁴ <https://energynews.us/2019/06/18/mississippis-move-toward-long-term-energy-planning-could-boost-efficiency/>

⁷⁵ <https://yallpolitics.com/2022/06/08/commissioner-presley-announces-approval-of-120m-solar-facility-by-oris-energy-in-lowndes-county/>

⁷⁶ <https://www.mpbonline.org/blogs/news/new-initiative-could-help-some-mississippians-save-money-on-energy/>

\$150 bill credit for moderate-income customers who may not qualify for federal bill assistance programs. Additionally, the program would provide free \$35 energy efficiency kits, nearly \$500,000 for customer education, and an additional \$540,000 for energy utility bill payment relief for older and disabled ratepayers.

Of course, while these measures demonstrate progress with regards to the Mississippi PSC taking action, many more steps are needed to alleviate the nation's worst energy burdens. A more strategic approach, to centering the needs of people on the frontlines of energy insecurity, is also vital.

Oregon

Oregon has demonstrated surprising outcomes with regards to equity. Oregon has demonstrated a track record of success as a national leader in climate and environmental justice. In 2021, Oregon Governor Kate Brown signed HB 2021, which established a goal of zero-emission electricity by 2040, in addition to complementary legislation that aimed to “subsidize low income rate payers and give social justice organizations more voice in utilities’ plans for a clean and equitable energy future,” legislation that environmental justice coalition Oregon Just Transition Alliance championed.⁷⁷ One would reasonably conclude that the Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) would be similarly leading on energy equity issues.

That has not been the case. In April 2022, the Oregon PUC released a draft report on the future of gas for the state that stood in contrast with the state’s long-term objectives of zero-emission electricity. Additionally, the Oregon PUC primarily relied on input from the state’s three largest private natural gas utilities. These utilities have challenged the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality’s ability to regulate greenhouse gas emissions.⁷⁸ The report ultimately advocated for adding more natural gas customers and expanding natural gas infrastructure, which would significantly worsen equity and environmental justice outcomes for Oregon’s low-income communities and communities of color that are most vulnerable to the public health and environmental challenges that fossil-based generation pose. Advocacy groups criticized the report as demonstrative of the Oregon PUC failing to “come to grips with the problematic gas industry of Oregon” and accepting the state’s gas utilities without question.⁷⁹ Additionally, the Citizens’ Utility Board criticized the plan as failing to meet climate goals and failing to serve customers.⁸⁰

However, not all Oregon PUC-related outcomes are causes for pessimism with regards to energy equity. For instance, the Oregon PUC in 2022 announced that it was considering proposing



77 <https://www.sightline.org/2021/09/23/environmental-justice-advocates-lead-oregon-to-100-percent-clean-electricity-future/>

78 <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2022/07/11/report-on-future-of-natural-gas-in-oregon-draws-criticism-from-a-customer-watchdog-group/>

79 <https://socan.eco/oregons-puc-draft-report-on-the-future-of-gas/>

80 <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2022/07/11/report-on-future-of-natural-gas-in-oregon-draws-criticism-from-a-customer-watchdog-group/>

rules to protect customers from utility shutoffs and discharges, which disproportionately affect low-income households and people of color, in certain scenarios; these proposed rules include provisions regarding “ending late payment charges for low-income customers,” “eliminating deposits for low-income households and requiring utilities to return deposits to low-income residential customers,” “limiting charging reconnection fees for low-income customers,” and “preventing utility shutoffs in many extreme weather situations, including extreme cold or heat, and poor air quality.”⁸¹ These proposed rules would fundamentally tackle some of the most pressing energy equity-related challenges facing Oregon’s most vulnerable residents and would represent a win for environmental justice if implemented.



This range of outcomes demonstrates the complexities of evaluating a state public utility commission from an equity lens. While Oregon has taken steps backwards in supporting fossil fuel interests that adversely impact state residents, it has also taken steps forward in potentially developing rules that would significantly improve equity outcomes for residents. The jury is out regarding how the Oregon PUC’s decisions will be viewed.

South Carolina

For the South Carolina Public Service Commission (PSC), only one of seven commissioners, Commissioner Justin T. Williams, is a commissioner of color, despite the fact that over a quarter, or 27%, of the South Carolina population is Black. Given the large size of the commission, which requires four commissioners to vote in favor of a particular outcome for a decision to be approved, this lack of representativeness results in outcomes that hurt South Carolina’s most vulnerable communities.

The South Carolina PSC has demonstrated mixed success with regards to equity and environmental justice. The issue of equity is particularly important in a state like South Carolina, which ranks among the five states with the highest low-income energy burdens according to a 2019 US Department of Energy report.⁸² Energy efficiency measures would significantly help low-income customers in South Carolina.

Despite these high energy burdens, the South Carolina PSC has rejected a range of programs that would provide needed relief, including a solar program that would have saved utility customers \$18 million.⁸³ This decision drew criticism from the Southern Environmental Law Center, which articulated that the docket was an “incredibly disappointing decision that runs counter to the public interest” as the proposed program “would help families in South Carolina lower their monthly electric bill when so many are already choosing between keeping the lights on and their other essential needs.”

There is nuance to consider with regards to the South Carolina PSC. In 2021, the commission voted against approval of utility Duke Energy’s integrated resource plan, which advocates including the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy hailed as a win for clean energy and in protecting customers from growing energy bills.⁸⁴

81 <https://oregoncub.org/news/blog/changing-rules-to-prevent-utility-shutoffs/2601/>

82 https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2019/01/f58/WIP-Energy-Burden_final.pdf

83 <https://www.southernenvironment.org/press-release/south-carolina-public-service-commission-rejects-solar-program-that-would-save-all-utility-customers-18-million/>

84 <https://cleanenergy.org/blog/south-carolina-public-service-commission-hands-duke-back-its-irps/>

Promising Public Leadership in Influencing Commissioner Appointments through Advocacy

In a few states, there have been organized efforts among advocacy groups for the governor to appoint commissioners who have demonstrated particular emphasis on equity and environmental justice impacts. These case studies illustrate the potential role that environmental justice advocacy groups can play in petitioning governors to prioritize the appointment of commissioners who are committed to advancing equity and environmental justice through the state PUC's decisions.

North Carolina

In 2019, a coalition of 14 environmental groups submitted a letter to North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper petitioning him to "appoint members to the North Carolina Utilities Commission that do not have ties to the fossil fuel industry and will protect health and promote clean energy."⁸⁵ As a result of this process, one of the three commissioners that Governor Cooper appointed was a commissioner of color, Commissioner Floyd B. McKissick Jr.⁸⁶

Pennsylvania

In 2021, climate activists advocated for Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf to appoint commissioners onto the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) who were focused on climate justice. However, progress on these appointments has been temporarily blocked by Republican state legislators, who control the state legislature and have refused to approve Wolf's appointees out of protest of Governor Wolf's commitment for Pennsylvania to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a regional cap-and-trade program. Currently, the Pennsylvania PUC has one commissioner of color, Commissioner Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, one of eight Black woman commissioners nationally.

Legislating Change: Strengthening Equity & Justice in Our Regulatory System Through State Legislatures

As detailed in this report, state public utilities commissions are a particularly important, yet often overlooked, decision making body with regards to critical energy policy and regulatory matters. They approve electric utilities' integrated resource plans, regulate the state's investor-owned utilities, and maintain control over resource planning and acquisition, in addition to general utility service across the state.⁸⁷ Yet, for many PUCs and in many instances, equity has not been a central component of state PUC's approach to utility

"Every day, I complain, protest, and object, but it takes such vigilance and activism to keep legislators on their toes and government accountable to the people on environmental issues."

- Hazel Johnson, environmental activist

85 https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2019/North-Carolina-Utilities-Commission-03-28-2019.php

86 <https://www.facingsouth.org/2019/05/gov-coopers-appointments-herald-change-duke-energy-oversight>

87 https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-03/documents/background_paper.pdf

regulation.

There are signs pointing to a more proactive approach that state PUCs can take to accelerate the affordable, efficient and clean energy transition, while advancing positive equity and environmental justice outcomes. The 2021 US Department of Energy report *Advancing Equity in Utility Regulation* outlines several examples of recent bills that state legislatures have passed that have strengthened these commissions' roles in advancing climate justice and equity.⁸⁸ Some states already had such initiatives on the books. For example,

- Colorado SB 21-272, passed in 2021, requires the Colorado Public Utilities Commission to “adopt rules for ‘all of its work’ to...‘consider how best to provide equity, minimize impacts, and prioritize benefits to disproportionately impacted communities and address historical inequities.’”⁸⁹
- Illinois SB 2408, passed in 2021, requires the Illinois Commerce Commission to conduct a comprehensive study and submit a report... assessing whether low-income discount rates for electric (and natural gas) residential customers are appropriate.” The bill also created authorization to “permit or require utilities to file a tariff establishing low-income discount rates” while increasing “minimum spending levels for low-income energy efficiency programs.”⁹⁰
- Maine HP 1251, passed in 2021, requires “equity considerations to be incorporated in decision-making for state agencies, including the Public Utilities Commission.”⁹¹
- Massachusetts Bill S.9, passed in 2021, requires the Department of Public Utilities to “include equity among six priorities for meeting statewide greenhouse gas emission limits.”⁹²
- New York’s Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, passed in 2019, imposed a “requirement to direct at least 35-40% of the program’s benefits to historically disadvantaged communities.”⁹³
- Washington’s Clean Energy Transformation Act, passed in 2019, directs the Utilities and Transportation Commission with “ensuring that all customers are benefiting from the transition to clean energy...through the equitable distribution of energy and non-energy benefits and the reduction of burdens to vulnerable populations and highly impacted communities.”⁹⁴

These pieces of legislation are a critical step. However, it is also important to ensure that state PUC commissioners reflect the racial, ethnic, gender, and geographic diversity of the states they represent.



88 https://eta-publications.lbl.gov/sites/default/files/feur_12_-_advancing_equity_in_utility_regulation.pdf

89 <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb21-272>

90 <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=110&GA=102&DocTypeId=S-B&DocNum=2408&GAID=16&LegID=&SpecSess=&Session=>

91 https://legislature.maine.gov/bills/display_ps.asp?paper=HP1251&snum=128&PID=0

92 <https://malegislature.gov/bills/192/S9>

93 <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2019/S6599>

94 <http://lawfilesexst.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/Senate/5116-S2.SL.pdf?q=20210822161309>

WHAT'S NEXT: ADVANCING DEMOCRACY AND REPRESENTATION IN PUCs

The keys to success in advancing equity and inclusion in the PUCs/PSCs are directly tied to representational governance. When the commissioners occupying those seats truly see themselves as accountable to the people, the public wins! From New York, to Michigan, Mississippi, California, Georgia, Arizona, and beyond, we see examples of the progress that happens when the people wield the power of influence. Groups such as Partnership for Southern Equity, NY EJ Alliance, NJ EJ Alliance, Education, Economics, California EJ Alliance, Environmental, Climate and Health Organization (EEECHO), Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition, and groups such as Center for Biological Diversity, National Consumer Law Center, People's Utility Commons, Institute for Energy Justice, Just Solutions Collective and Earthjustice, and so many more, have combined forces to advance grassroots justice and equity in our regulatory system.

Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing

Systems of all shapes and sizes should ask themselves, “how am I practicing equity and justice in this space? What does my commitment to equity and justice look like individually and within my community? Is this an *actually representative* space?”

There are several forms of equity to consider in representational governance in energy regulation in the context of the PUC/PSCs.

Procedural Equity is the commitment to communities having a voice in the decision-making process and ensures that planning and implementation is done through diverse and inclusive engagement processes.⁹⁵ **Distributive Equity** asks who is bearing the brunt of the negative effects of our energy system and who therefore is most equipped to generate the solutions. Distributive equity goes a step further than procedural equity – not just being committed to including communities harmed by inequitable energy infrastructure, but also taking cues from their *leadership*⁹⁶. **Interactional Equity** goes further, ensuring that the people affected by a decision are treated with dignity

and respect in the decision-making, planning and implementation process.

To be clear: those in power **must** be held accountable in ensuring that their commitment to equity goes beyond the procedural, surface level!

95 Georgetown Climate Center Equitable Adaptation Legal and Policy Toolkit. <https://www.georgetownclimate.org/adaptation/toolkits/equitable-adaptation-toolkit/procedural-equity.html>

96 Deutsch, M. 1975. “Equity, equality, and need: What determines which value will be used as the basis of distributive justice?” *Journal of Social Issues* 31:137–49



Putting the ‘Public’ Back in Public Utility Commissions

Through the concerted efforts of elected officials, the PUC/PSCs themselves, frontline communities, and other organizations, we can democratize our regulatory system. We can ensure that these commissions are accountable first and foremost to the will and interests of the public.

Recommendations for Stakeholders :: Creating a Sustainable, Equitable, People Powered Energy Future :

1. **Governors** must prioritize the appointment of commissioners who are representative of the PUC/PSC constituency and who bring an equity lens, through lived perspectives to the utility regulation process.
2. **State legislators** must pass legislation that requires the state PUCs to formally consider equity and environmental justice impacts in official rulemaking and regulatory proceedings. Constituents and community members can play a role in rallying their elected representatives to support such legislation.
3. **State PUCs** must advance equity by improving the accessibility of information, including websites, dockets, and any other relevant materials to ensure accountability through facilitating resident tracking of, and participation in, various docket proceedings. PUCs must also make materials available in accessible languages and avoid technical jargon. PUCs must present information simply and clearly.
4. **Environmental advocacy groups** must voice support for the nomination and appointment of equity-focused commissioners and support gubernatorial nominees who prioritize equity in all government appointments including PUCs. These groups must also hold Commissioners accountable after they take office⁹⁷.
5. **Watchdog Groups** such as Center for Public Integrity and Energy and Policy Institute must monitor and track the progress in democratization and representational governance in the PUCs.
6. **Frontline Community Groups** must be involved in decisions made by PUCs. This will not only hold PUCs accountable to the community but community leadership can also advance equity through representation as potential Commissioners can emerge from community engagement. Specifically, frontline community groups can:
 - a. Utilize popular education, organizing, media campaigns, etc., to ensure that community members know the function of the PUCs/PSCs and identify how PUC/PSC decisions affect the community. Examples of issues/policies/regulations that may impact the community:
 - i. Investments in energy efficiency and/or renewable energy.
 - ii. Contracts (ensure that companies set appropriate standards for worker treatment, as these workers are members of the community. Companies that are unionized, promote JEDI and/or Just Transition prin-

“We will either defend the rights of people and the earth, and for that we have to dismantle the rights that corporations have assigned to themselves, or corporations will in the next three decades destroy this planet, in terms of human possibilities.”

97 <https://ignitenational.org/blog/5-ways-to-hold-elected-officials-accountable>

- principles should be prioritized in the bidding process).⁹⁸
- iii. Approval to build or expand power plants.
 - iv. Fixed fees for people engaged in net metering.
 - v. Rate cases - petitions from utilities to adjust rates.
 - vi. Rulemaking (emissions reductions, community solar, net metering, etc.).
- b. For commissions where the commissioners are elected:
 - i. Ensure that voter education includes voter knowledge and understanding of the PUCs/PSCs.
 - ii. Ensure that communities know the history, allegiances, orientation, and commitment of the candidates for the open seats.
 - iii. Ensure that the communities exact commitments from the candidates on the campaign trail for the types of reforms they would like to see in the PUC/PSC.
 - iv. Facilitate the grooming of candidates that will embody representational governance as well as equity and justice centered leadership.
 - c. For commissions where the commissioners are appointed:
 - i. Ensure that there is a relationship with the Office of the Governor and an understanding that the community considers these appointments to be critical to their assessment of the governor's leadership and to their support of the governor.
 - ii. Ensure that the community has a clear and articulated understanding of what they are looking for in candidates to be appointed to the Commission.
 - iii. When possible, suggest specific candidates who embody representational governance as well as equity and justice centered leadership.
 - iv. When the community is aware of who is being considered, vocally support the candidate who embodies representational governance as well as equity and justice centered leadership.
 - d. Regularly attend PUC meetings. Through participation, community members will learn what key issues are under consideration, can provide input during public comment periods, and identify PUC Commissioner priorities, which can help with targeted outreach and advocacy.
 - e. Submit written comments to PUC/PSC proceedings/hearings.
 - f. Provide oral comments at public field hearings or during formal hearings.
 - g. Apply for official intervention in a case, most often through legal representation.
 - h. Participate in Commission workshops or rulemaking proceedings.

“The people who have dealt with these hardships should be the ones making the decision about any new programs that will help people like us.”

- Kiava Stewart, Michigan resident and Soulardarity member

- i. Organize ratepayers and ask the PUC/ PSC to open a docket:
 - i. Contest/appeal disconnection of services for a group of ratepayers based on equity considerations.
 - ii. Initiate investigatory or rulemaking proceeding on an equity issue.
- j. Use or adapt an existing framework to help guide equity and just transition. For example, The University of Michigan's School for Environment and Sustainability recently published their Energy Equity Project report with multi-dimensional approaches and extensive resources so different communities can adapt it to their needs.⁹⁹
- k. In places where PUCs are elected positions, community members can organize and educate their communities by integrating PUCs into civic engagement efforts: considering candidates, educating candidates, making sure voters understand the stakes in choosing representatives for the office.¹⁰⁰
- l. Community members can draw on campaigns and initiatives from other communities that have been successful in advancing equity and/or sustainability agendas within their PUCs. The Chisholm Legacy Project's Policies for the People policy exchange¹⁰¹ has model legislation from around the country that can be adapted for other communities.



99 https://seas.umich.edu/sites/all/files/2022_EEP_Report.pdf?utm_source=pr&utm_campaign=eep&utm_id=eep+framework

100 NAACP Just Energy Policies Campaign guidance document

101 <https://thechisholmlegacyproject.org/policy-exchange/>

Appendix A: Database of State Public Utility Commissions

State	PUC Name	PUC Website	Appointed vs. Elected	Partisan vs. Nonpartisan	2021 FY Budget	# of Commissioners	Term Length	Term Limits	Commissioner Salary
Alabama	Alabama Public Service Commission	http://psc.alabama.gov/	Elected	Partisan	\$13,837,348	3	4 years	None	\$103,490
Alaska	Alaska Regulatory Commission	http://rca.alaska.gov/RCAWeb/home.aspx	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$9,476,300	5	6 years	None	\$137,664
Arizona	Arizona Corporation Commission	https://www.azcc.gov/	Elected	Partisan	\$28,640,100	5	4 years	2 consecutive terms	\$154,320
Arkansas	Arkansas Public Service Commission	http://www.arkansas.gov/psc/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$12,482,702	3	6 years	None	\$139,836
California	California Public Utilities Commission	https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$1,680,012,000	5	6 years	None	\$219,000
Colorado	Colorado Public Utilities Commission	https://puc.colorado.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$16,802,953	3	4 years	None	\$116,112
Connecticut	Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority	https://portal.ct.gov/pura	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$27,606,005	3	4 years	None	\$150,000
Delaware	Delaware Public Service Commission	https://depssc.delaware.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$4,103,000	5	5 years	None	\$110,733
Florida	Florida Public Service Commission	http://www.psc.state.fl.us/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$25,931,875	5	4 years	None	\$131,036
Georgia	Georgia Public Service Commission	https://psc.ga.gov/	Elected	Partisan	\$10,836,897	5	6 years	None	\$116,452
Hawaii	Hawaii Public Utilities Commissioner	https://puc.hawaii.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$16,918,158	3	6 years	None	\$134,688
Idaho	Idaho Public Utilities Commission	http://puc.idaho.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$6,554,200	3	6 years	None	\$110,074
Illinois	Illinois Commerce Commission	https://www.icc.illinois.gov/	Appointed	Partisan	\$57,960,000	5	5 years	None	\$168,000
Indiana	Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission	https://www.in.gov/iurc/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$9,297,370	5	4 years	None	\$120,716
Iowa	Iowa Utilities Board	https://iub.iowa.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$10,730,215	3	6 years	None	\$128,890
Kansas	Kansas Corporation Commission	https://kcc.ks.gov/about-us/meet-the-commissioners	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$23,251,002	3	Serves at the governor's pleasure	None	\$99,507
Kentucky	Kentucky Public Service Commission	https://psc.ky.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$21,488,700	3	4 years	None	\$104,762
Louisiana	Louisiana Public Service Commission District 1	http://www.lpsc.louisiana.gov/Default.aspx	Elected	Partisan	\$10,242,843	5	6 years	2.5 in 3 consecutive terms	\$45,000
Maine	Maine Public Utilities Commission	https://www.maine.gov/mpuc/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$20,531,641	3	6 years	None	\$135,179
Maryland	Maryland Public Service Commission	https://www.psc.state.md.us/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$21,049,000	5	5 years	None	\$165,565
Massachusetts	Massachusetts Public Utilities Commission	https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-public-utilities	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$20,775,745	3	Two are appointed for a term coterminous with that of the governor, and one is appointed for a four-year term	None	\$129,000
Michigan	Michigan Public Service Commission	http://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$33,014,200	3	6 years	None	\$142,800
Minnesota	Minnesota Public Utilities Commission	http://mn.gov/puc/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$9,059,000	5	6 years	None	\$140,000
Mississippi	Mississippi Public Service Commission	https://www.psc.ms.gov/	Elected	Partisan	\$4,645,180	3	4 years	None	\$120,745
Missouri	Missouri Public Service Commission	http://www.psc.mo.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$13,863,814	5	Serves at the governor's pleasure	None	\$113,142

Montana	Montana Public Service Commission	http://psc.mt.gov/	Elected	Partisan	\$4,839,941	5	4 years	Two terms in any 16 year period	\$111,179
Nebraska	Nebraska Public Service Commission	http://www.psc.state.ne.us/	Elected	Partisan	\$2,359,563	5	6 years	None	\$75,000
Nevada	Nevada Public Utilities Commission	http://puc.nv.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$16,577,697	3	4 years	None	\$125,021
New Hampshire	New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission	http://www.puc.nh.gov/index.htm	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$29,964,921	3	6 years	None	\$111,687
New Jersey	New Jersey Board of Public Utilities	https://www.bpu.state.nj.us/bpu/index.shtml	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$83,082,000	5	6 years	None	\$175,000
New Mexico	New Mexico Public Regulation Commission	http://www.nmprc.state.nm.us/#gsc.tab=0	Appointed	Partisan	\$169,351,004	5	4 years	2 consecutive	\$90,000
New York	New York Public Service Commission	https://www.dps.ny.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$100,482,000	7	6 years	None	\$190,000
North Carolina	North Carolina Utilities Commission	http://www.ncuc.net/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$8,107,898	7	6 years	None	\$149,451
North Dakota	North Dakota Public Service Commission	http://www.psc.nd.gov/index.php	Elected	Partisan	\$19,323,404	3	6 years	None	\$110,829
Ohio	Ohio Public Utilities Commission	http://www.puco.ohio.gov/puco/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$61,767,864	5	5 years	None	\$159,994
Oklahoma	Oklahoma Corporation Commission	https://oklahoma.gov/occ.html	Elected	Partisan	\$16,865,856	3	6 years	12 years	\$114,713
Oregon	Oregon Public Utility Commission	http://www.oregon.gov/PUC/pages/index.aspx	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$104,589,455	3	4 years	None	\$160,285
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission	http://www.puc.state.pa.us/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$83,083,000	5	5 years	None	\$155,813
Rhode Island	Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission	http://www.ripuc.org/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$11,382,980	3	6 years	None	\$117,412
South Carolina	South Carolina Public Service Commission	https://psc.sc.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$5,688,938	7	4 years	None	\$178,619
South Dakota	South Dakota Public Utilities Commission	http://puc.sd.gov/	Elected	Partisan	\$495,783,951	3	6 years	None	\$108,514
Tennessee	Tennessee Public Utility Commission	https://www.tn.gov/tpuc.html	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$6,682,900	8	6 years	None	\$164,688
Texas	Public Utility Commission of Texas	https://www.puc.texas.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$15,266,496	5	6 years	None	\$159,782
Utah	Utah Public Service Commission	https://psc.utah.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$26,270,000	3	6 years	None	\$111,904
Vermont	Vermont Public Utility Commission	http://puc.vermont.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$3,904,459	3	6 years	None	\$160,763
Virginia	Virginia State Corporation Commission	http://www.scc.virginia.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$124,178,596	3	6 years	None	\$172,000
Washington	Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission	http://www.utc.wa.gov/Pages/default.aspx	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$65,274,000	3	6 years	None	\$149,028
West Virginia	West Virginia Public Service Commission	http://www.psc.state.wv.us/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$20,544,654	3	6 years	None	\$90,000
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Public Service Commission	http://psc.wi.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$51,640,700	3	6 years	None	\$135,013
Wyoming	Wyoming Public Service Commission	https://psc.wyo.gov/	Appointed	Nonpartisan	\$16,569,615	3	6 years	None	\$121,692

Appendix B: Database of State Public Utility Commissioners

State	Commissioner Name	Commissioner Party	Commissioner Gender	Commissioner Race	Commissioner Tenure	Legal Background?	Worked as Lobbyist?	Worked as Elected Official?
Alabama	Jeremy Oden	Republican	M	White	2012-Present			
	Chip Beeker	Republican	M	White	2015-Present			
	Twinkle Andress Cavanaugh	Republican	F	White	2010-Present			
Alaska	Keith Kurber	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Robert M. Pickett	N/A	M	White	2008-Present			
	Robert Doyle	N/A	M	White	2022-Present			
	Daniel A. Sullivan	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
	Jan Wilson	N/A	F	White	2006-Present			
Arizona	James O'Connor	Republican	M	White	2021-Present			
	Justin Olson	Republican	M	White	2017-Present			
	Lea Márquez Peterson	Republican	F	Hispanic/Latino	2019-Present			
	Sandra Kennedy	Democrat	F	Black	2019-Present			
Arkansas	Anna Tovar	Democrat	F	Hispanic/Latino	2021-Present			
	Justin Tate	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
	Ted J. Thomas	N/A	M	White	2015-Present			
	Kimberly A. O'Guinn	N/A	F	Black	2016-Present			
	Clifford Rechtschaffen	N/A	M	White	2017-Present			
	Darcie Houck	N/A	F	American Indian	2021-Present			
	Genevieve Shiroma	N/A	F	Asian	2019-Present			
	John Reynolds	N/A	M	Black	2021-Present			
California	Alice Reynolds	N/A	F	White	2021-Present			
	Eric Blank	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
Colorado	John Gavan	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
	Megan Gilman	N/A	F	White	2020-Present			
	John Betkoski III	N/A	M	White	1997-Present			
Connecticut	Marissa Paslick Gillett	N/A	F	White	2019-Present			
	Michael Caron	N/A	M	White	2013-Present			
	Dallas Winslow	N/A	M	White	2005-Present			
Delaware	Harold Gray	N/A	M	Black	2014-Present			
	Joann Conaway	N/A	F	White	2001-Present			
	Kim Drexler	N/A	F	White	2015-Present			
	Manubhai "Mike" C. Karia	N/A	M	Asian	2015-Present			
	Andrew Giles Fay	N/A	M	White	2018-Present			
	Art Graham	N/A	M	Black	2010-Present			
	Gary Clark	N/A	M	White	2017-Present			
	Gabriella Passidomo	N/A	F	White	2021-Present			
Florida	Mike La Rosa	N/A	M	Hispanic/Latino	2021-Present			

	Jason Shaw	Republican	M	White	2019-Present			
	Tim Echols	Republican	M	White	2011-Present			
	Fitz Johnson	Republican	M	Black	2021-Present			
	Lauren "Bubba" McDonald Jr.	Republican	M	White	2009-Present			
Georgia	Tricia Pridemore	Republican	F	White	2018-Present			
	Naomi Kuwaye	N/A	F	Asian	2022-Present			
	Jennifer Potter	N/A	F	White	2018-Present			
Hawaii	Leo Asuncion, Jr.	N/A	M	Asian	2019-Present			
	Eric Anderson	N/A	M	White	2015-Present			
	John Chatburn	N/A	M	White	2022-Present			
	John R. Hammond, Jr.	N/A	M	White	2022-Present			
	Carrie Zalewski	Democrat	F	White	2019-Present			
	D. Ethan Kimbrel	Democrat	M	Black	2018-Present			
	Michael Carrigan	Democrat	M	White	2020-Present			
	Ann McCabe	Republican	F	White	2022-Present			
Illinois	VACANT							
	James Huston	N/A	M	White	2014-Present			
	Sarah Freeman	N/A	F	White	2016-Present			
	Stefanie Krevda	N/A	F	White	2018-Present			
	David Ziegner	N/A	M	White	1990-Present			
	VACANT							
Indiana								
	Geri Huser	N/A	F	White	2015-Present			
	Josh Byrnes	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			
	Richard Lozier	N/A	M	White	2017-Present			
Iowa								
	Andrew French	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			
	Dwight Keen	N/A	M	White	2018-Present			
	Susan Duffy	N/A	F	White	2019-Present			
Kansas								
	Kent Chandler	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			
	Mary Pat Regan	N/A	F	White	2022-Present			
	VACANT							
	Eric Skrmetta	Republican	M	White	2009-Present			
	Craig Greene	Republican	M	White	2017-Present			
	Lambert Boissiere III	Democrat	M	Black	2005-Present			
	Mike Francis	Republican	M	White	2017-Present			
	Foster Campbell	Democrat	M	White	2003-Present			
Louisiana								
	Philip Bartlett	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
	Patrick Scully	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Randall Davis	N/A	M	White	2017-Present			
Maine								

Maryland	Anthony O'Donnell	N/A	M	White	2016-Present			
	Jason Stanek	N/A	M	White	2018-Present			
	Michael T. Richard	N/A	M	White	2016-Present			
	Patrice M. Bubar	N/A	F	White	2022-Present			
	Odogwu Obi Linton	N/A	M	Black	2017-Present			
Massachusetts	Cecile M. Fraser	N/A	F	Black	2017-Present			
	Matthew Nelson	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
	Robert Hayden	N/A	M	White	2015-Present			
Michigan	Daniel C. Scripps	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
	Katherine Peretick	N/A	F	White	2021-Present			
	Tremaine L. Phillips	N/A	M	Black	2019-Present			
Minnesota	Katie Sieben	Democrat	F	White	2017-Present			
	Valerie Means	Democrat	F	Black	2019-Present			
	Matthew Schuerger	N/A	M	White	2016-Present			
	John Turna	Republican	M	White	2015-Present			
	Joseph K. Sullivan	Democrat	M	White	2020-Present			
Mississippi	Brent Bailey	Republican	M	White	2020-Present			
	Brandon Presley	Democrat	M	White	2008-Present			
	Dane Maxwell	Republican	M	White	2020-Present			
Missouri	Glen Kolkmeier	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Jason R. Holsman	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			
	Maida J. Coleman	N/A	F	Black	2015-Present			
	Ryan A. Silvey	N/A	M	White	2018-Present			
	Scott T. Rupp	N/A	M	White	2014-Present			
Montana	Randy Pinocci	Republican	M	White	2019-Present			
	Tony O'Donnell	Republican	M	White	2017-Present			
	James Brown	Republican	M	White	2021-Present			
	Jennifer Fielder	Republican	F	White	2021-Present			
	Brad Johnson	Republican	M	White	2015-Present			
Nebraska	Dan Watermeier	Republican	M	White	2019-Present			
	Crystal Rhoades	Democrat	F	White	2015-Present			
	Tim Schram	Republican	M	White	2007-Present			
	Rod Johnson	Republican	M	White	1992-Present			
	Mary Ridder	Republican	F	White	2017-Present			
Nevada	C.J. Manthe	N/A	F	White	2018-Present			
	Hayley Williamson	N/A	F	White	2019-Present			
	Tammy Cordova	N/A	F	White	2020-Present			
New Hampshire	Carleton B. Simpson	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Pradip K. Chattopadhyay	N/A	M	Asian	2021-Present			
	Daniel C. Goldner	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Joseph L. Fiordaliso	N/A	M	White	2005-Present			
	Mary-Anna Holden	N/A	F	White	2012-Present			
New Jersey	Dianne Solomon	N/A	F	White	2013-Present			
	Upendra J. Chivukula	N/A	M	Asian	2014-Present			
	Robert Gordon	N/A	M	White	2018-Present			

New Mexico	Cynthia Hall	Democrat	F	White	2017-Present			
	Jefferson Byrd	Republican	M	White	2019-Present			
	Joseph M. Maestas	Democrat	M	Hispanic/Latino	2021-Present			
	Theresa Becenti-Aguilar	Democrat	F	American Indian	2019-Present			
	Stephen Fischmann	Democrat	M	White	2019-Present			
New York	Diane X. Burman	N/A	F	White	2013-Present			
	James S. Alesi	N/A	M	White	2017-Present			
	John B. Howard	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
	Tracey A. Edwards	N/A	F	Black	2019-Present			
	David J. Valesky	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	John B. Maggiore	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
North Carolina	Rory M. Christian	N/A	M	Black	2021-Present			
North Carolina	Charlotte A. Mitchell	N/A	F	White	2017-Present			
	ToNola D. Brown-Bland	N/A	F	Black	2009-Present			
	Karen M. Kemeraite	N/A	F	White	2022-Present			
	Daniel G. Clodfelter	N/A	M	White	2017-Present			
	Kimberly W. Duffley	N/A	F	White	2019-Present			
	Jeffrey A. Hughes	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
North Dakota	Floyd B. McKissick Jr.	N/A	M	Black	2019-Present			
	Sheri Haugen-Hoffart	Republican	F	White	2022-Present			
	Julie Fedorchak	Republican	F	White	2013-Present			
	Randel Christmann	Republican	M	White	2013-Present			
	Daniel R. Conway	N/A	M	White	2017-Present			
	Dennis P. Deters	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
Ohio	Lawrence K. Friedeman	N/A	M	White	2017-Present			
	M. Beth Trombold	N/A	F	White	2013-Present			
	Jenifer French	N/A	F	White	2021-Present			
Oklahoma	Bob Anthony	Republican	M	White	1989-Present			
	Dana Murphy	Republican	F	White	2008-Present			
	Todd Hiett	Republican	M	White	2015-Present			
Oregon	Letha Tawney	N/A	F	White	2018-Present			
	Mark Thompson	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
	Megan Walseth Decker	N/A	F	White	2017-Present			
	Gladys Brown Dutrieuille	N/A	F	Black	2013-Present			
	John F. Coleman, Jr.	N/A	M	White	2010-Present			
	Ralph Yanora	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			
Pennsylvania	VACANT							
	VACANT							
Rhode Island	Abigail Anthony	N/A	F	White	2017-Present			
	John C. Revens Jr.	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Ronald Gerwatowski	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			

South Carolina	Carolyn "Carolee" Williams	N/A	F	White	2020-Present			
	Delton W. Powers Jr.	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			
	Florence Belser	N/A	F	White	2019-Present			
	Headen B. Thomas	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			
	Justin T. Williams	N/A	M	Black	2018-Present			
	Stephen "Mike" Caston	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			
	Thomas J. "Tom" Ervin	N/A	M	White	2018-Present			
South Dakota	Chris Nelson	Republican	M	White	2011-Present			
	Gary Hanson	Republican	M	White	2003-Present			
	Kristie Fiegen	Republican	F	White	2011-Present			
Tennessee	Robin L. Morrison	N/A	F	White	2013-Present			
	Kenneth C. Hill	N/A	M	White	2009-Present			
	David Jones	N/A	M	White	2012-Present			
	Herbert H. Hilliard	N/A	M	Black	2012-Present			
	John Hie	N/A	M	White	2018-Present			
	Clay R. Good	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Earl R. Taylor	N/A	M	White	2012-Present			
	VACANT							
Texas	Peter Lake	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Will McAdams	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Lori Cobos	N/A	F	Hispanic/Latino	2021-Present			
	Jimmy Glotfelty	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
	Kathleen Jackson	N/A	F	White	2022-Present			
Utah	David Clark	N/A	M	White	2013-Present			
	Ron Allen	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			
	Thad LeVar	N/A	M	White	2013-Present			
Vermont	Anthony Z. Roisman	N/A	M	White	2017-Present			
	Margaret Cheney	N/A	F	White	2013-Present			
	Riley Allen	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
Virginia	Jehmal T. Hudson	N/A	M	Black	2020-Present			
	Judith Williams Jagdmann	N/A	F	White	2006-Present			
	VACANT							
	Ann Rendahl	N/A	M	White	2015-Present			
Washington	David W. Danner	N/A	F	White	2013-Present			
	VACANT							
	Bill Raney	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
West Virginia	Charlotte Lane	N/A	F	White	2019-Present			
	Renee Larrick	N/A	F	White	2017-Present			
	Ellen Nowak	N/A	F	White	2018-Present			
Wisconsin	Rebecca Cameron Valcq	N/A	F	Hispanic/Latino	2019-Present			
	Tyler Huebner	N/A	M	White	2020-Present			
	Chris Petrie	N/A	M	White	2021-Present			
Wyoming	Mary Throne	N/A	F	White	2019-Present			
	Mike Robinson	N/A	M	White	2019-Present			

References

[https://ballotpedia.org/Public_Service_Commissioner_\(state_executive_office\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Public_Service_Commissioner_(state_executive_office))

<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/10/09/election-and-voter-attitudes-appendix/>

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045221>

Appendix C: Public Testimony and Comments

Kiava Stewart, Soulardarity: Direct Testimony before the Michigan Public Service Commission December 23, 2020 <https://mi-psc.force.com/sfc/servlet.shepherd/version/download/068t000000HxXGEAA3>

Stephanie Johnson, Soulardarity and We Want Green: Direct Testimony before the Michigan Public Service Commission May 19, 2022 <https://mi-psc.force.com/sfc/servlet.shepherd/version/download/0688y000002xydTAAQ>

Trey Harrington, NYC, public comment period

James Armbruster, NYC, public comment period

Diane Gibeau, Carmel Valley California: public comment period