



**California Public Utilities Commission**  
**505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Contact: Terrie Prosper, 415.703.1366, [news@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:news@cpuc.ca.gov)

**PRESS RELEASE**

Docket #: R.18-07-006

**CPUC TO EVALUATE STRATEGIES TO  
MITIGATE ENERGY RATE INCREASES**

SAN FRANCISCO, September 16, 2021 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), in ongoing efforts to address the affordability of utility services, will open a new phase of its affordability proceeding to explore strategies to mitigate future energy rate increases.

The CPUC previously opened a proceeding to assess the affordability impacts of individual CPUC proceedings and utility rate requests. Since that time, the CPUC issued a [decision](#) in July 2020 adopting metrics and methodologies for assessing the relative affordability of public utility services, held an [En Banc](#) in February 2021 to hear from experts about ways to modernize California’s energy system while maintaining affordable rates, and produced a first annual [Affordability Report](#) in April 2021, among other actions.

Yesterday, Commissioner Darcie L. Houck issued an [Amended Scoping Ruling](#) in the proceeding that opens a new phase to explore strategies to mitigate future energy rate increases, including strategies proposed at the February En Banc. The CPUC will examine whether changes to CPUC rules and practices, changes to rules and practices of other entities, and/or current statutes, should be recommended to mitigate future rate increases.

The CPUC is seeking involvement from a variety of participants, including ratepayer advocates; representatives for low-income, disadvantaged, and vulnerable communities; environmental advocates; academics; industry representatives; sister energy agencies; and other parties impacted by these policies. A Prehearing Conference on October 22, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., is an opportunity for those interested to request party status and provide input on the proposed scope and schedule. The proposed schedule includes a workshop in early 2022 at which parties will share preliminary



proposals for strategies to mitigate rate increases and debate the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies. Following the workshop, parties will file comments proposing refined strategies, followed by a round of opening and reply party comments on the proposals. CPUC staff will then develop and issue a report proposing actions the CPUC could take, or recommend actions that other entities could take (such as the Legislature or other agencies) to mitigate future rate increases.

Comments from the public about the proceeding may be submitted to the Public Comments section of the [Docket Card](#). More information about the proceeding is available at [www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/electrical-energy/affordability](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/electrical-energy/affordability).

Today's action follows many the CPUC has taken toward affordability, including initiating a proceeding focused on the San Joaquin Valley to establish a methodology for identifying disadvantaged communities in the region and approving \$56 million in funding for 11 pilots that seek to reduce energy costs for households in these communities by way of appliance retrofit pilots, expanded outreach and enrollment in existing demand-side management programs, and new bill protection measures. In addition, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated affordability challenges, the CPUC has taken numerous measures to help protect consumers, including temporary moratoria on disconnections for failure to pay utility bills, expanded access to bill subsidy programs, and requiring utilities to offer payment plans for customer debt.

The CPUC regulates services and utilities, safeguards the environment, and assures Californians' access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. For more information on the CPUC, please visit [www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov).

###

