



CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

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CUB: COM ED TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ONGOING BILLING PROBLEMS TO PUSH FOR MILLIONS IN HIGHER DELIVERY RATES

Nearly two years after Commonwealth Edison botched its launch of a new billing system, the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) said Wednesday it hopes to block Illinois' biggest electric utility from making customers, and not shareholders, cover nearly \$50 million in spending to fix the ongoing problems.

The utility watchdog made its argument as it challenges ComEd's push to increase delivery rates by a total of \$268.5 million by the end of the year. The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) last year approved a four-year rate plan for ComEd, but a provision in state regulatory law allows ComEd to petition ([Docket 25-0383](#)) the ICC for higher rates in yearly "reconciliation" cases. A portion of the increase is to make up for higher rates that were approved earlier but had not yet been put in place—however, tens of millions more are to recover excess spending for ComEd going over budget on capital expenditures.

CUB filed testimony arguing that tucked away in ComEd's reconciliation rate-hike plan is an attempt by the utility to improperly win millions of dollars a year in higher rates in connection to problems—billing delays, overcharges and other errors—ComEd customers have experienced since the utility launched its new system in February of 2024. According to the testimony, the improper charges include:

- \$9.3 million a year in higher rates to recover \$49 million in spending to fix the billing system, about which CUB is still hearing consumer complaints. "It's ridiculous for ComEd to try to raise our rates in connection with billing problems the utility giant created itself," CUB Executive Director Sarah Moskowitz said. "Customers shouldn't pay higher rates for ComEd's incompetence."
- CUB argued the billing problems also came into play in two instances where ComEd is seeking performance bonus payment, under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), that the utility has not earned, including:
 - A \$5.8 million incentive payment for reducing disconnections in certain lower-income ZIP codes. Under an order approving these performance incentive metrics, the ICC adopted a requirement proposed by CUB that the utility cannot collect this bonus for simply delaying disconnections. CUB argued the disconnection reductions were not due to improved affordability or customer assistance but to the fact that ComEd's error-prone billing system prevented it from disconnecting customers for nonpayment for most of 2024.
 - A \$3.5 million incentive payment ComEd argues it deserves for hitting a performance-metric target for customer service. CUB argued ComEd cannot claim this bonus because, amid the billing-system problems, the utility lost the data necessary to prove its claimed improvement.

"Shame on ComEd," Moskowitz said. "The utility shouldn't benefit from its own failures."

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ComEd has had a number of run-ins with the ICC since its corruption scandal erupted in 2020. In 2022, state regulators ordered ComEd to pay a \$38 million fine in connection with the scandal. (ComEd was fined \$200 million by federal authorities in 2020, after admitting to a bribery scheme to pass legislation that implemented a “formula rate” system and hundreds of millions of dollars in rate hikes over a decade.)

In December of 2023, under a new, four-year rate-setting system, the ICC rejected the utility’s first proposed grid plan for, among other things, failing to prove affordability, and slashed its proposed rate hike by about \$1 billion. ComEd refiled its grid plan, and in 2024 won \$606 million in rate hikes, spread out through 2027. Now, it’s asking for a \$268.5 million increase in the reconciliation process: “We support ending this reconciliation benefit for utilities,” Moskowitz said. “If ComEd blows through its budget in a given year, customers shouldn’t have to pay the excess.”

In early November, two regulatory judges issued a “proposed order” in the case—which is their recommendation on how the ICC should rule. The proposed order backed about \$16.4 million in reductions for ComEd, and largely agreed with consumer advocates about the items connected to the billing system.

CUB hopes the ICC follows those recommendations, and goes even further in the final order, expected no later than Dec. 20, with rates taking effect shortly after. CUB urged consumers to sign a [petition against ComEd’s wasteful spending](#) or to call the ICC, at 1-800-524-0795.

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For more than 40 years the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) has been Illinois’ leading nonprofit utility watchdog group. Created by the Illinois Legislature, CUB opened its doors in 1984 to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then, CUB has saved consumers more than \$20 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds. For more information, call CUB’s Consumer Hotline at 1-800-669-5556 or visit CUB’s website, www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org.