



Colorado General Assembly, House Committee on State, Civic, Military & Veterans Affairs

Chairwoman Shannon Bird
Vice Chair Marc Snyder
Representative Adrienne Benavidez
Representative Mary Bradfield
Representative Lindsey Daugherty
Representative Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez
Representative Matt Gray
Representative Kathy Kipp
Representative Stephanie Luck
Representative Janice Rich
Representative Shane Sandridge

Re: Support of SB21-272 Measures to Modernize the Public Utilities Commission

June 4, 2021

Madame Chair Bird, Vice Chair Snyder and Members of the Committee,

My name is Gwen Farnsworth and I am a senior policy advisor with the Clean Energy Program at Western Resource Advocates (WRA), a regional non-profit conservation organization. For over 30 years WRA has been working with policymakers and other advocates to advance clean energy, protect air, water, and wildlife—and sustain the lives and livelihoods of people in the West. We address the impacts of climate change by offering evidence-based policy solutions that deliver lasting results and that sustain diverse environments, people, and economies. On behalf of WRA, I am writing in support of SB21-272 – Measures to Modernize the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), brought by Representative Bennett, Majority Leader Fenberg and Senator Hansen.

WRA broadly supports the bill, which would make important changes that will help resource the PUC to be able to responsibly regulate utilities. For instance, the bill would amend the use of the Fixed Utility Fund to allow the PUC to spend up to \$250,000 a year to contract with outside consultants to provide technical expertise. Additionally, the bill enables additional funding to support the important work of the PUC. This bill would ensure sufficient funds and technical support are available to enable the PUC staff to operate as effective regulators.

Another valuable element of SB21-272 is the initiation of a rulemaking process for the Commission to address disproportionately impacted communities in its decisions. That provision in the bill explains how disproportionately impacted and low-income communities should be defined, while allowing for public input into how the PUC can integrate those concepts into its day-to-day operations.

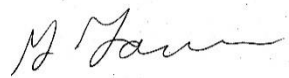
The bill also requires PUC consideration of the costs of carbon and the opportunity for cost savings with securitized financing, when reviewing utility portfolios in electric resource planning. Additionally, the



bill creates a new opportunity for the utility to use securitized financing for a variety of public benefit purposes, which can provide savings for customers.

Finally, WRA would like to share our support for the changes to the renewable energy credit provisions of the bill, which would support Colorado in meeting our climate pollution reduction goals. For all of these reasons WRA urges your “aye” vote on SB21-272.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gwen Farnsworth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "G".

Gwen Farnsworth
Senior Policy Advisor, Clean Energy Program
Western Resource Advocates

Cc: Representative Tracey Bernett, Majority Leader Stephen Fenberg, Senator Chris Hansen