



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR
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Carpenter Renews Call for Legislative Hearing on WE Energies “Fixed Rate” Increase
Possible double-dipping and improper profiting allegations merit oversight

Madison – Senator Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee) called once again for a hearing in the legislature of public utilities’ plans to increase customer rates and dramatically shift a greater portion of a residential customer’s monthly bill to a “fixed charge” rather than a charge that fluctuates each month depending on how much power the customer uses.

Even as the Public Service Commission proceeds with a hearing on approving WE Energies’ plan to require residential customers to pay 5% more per month, allegations emerge that WE Energies could be paid double for costs related to keeping open a coal-fired plant in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula.

“Enough is enough! WE Energies is pushing its plan to punish energy-saving residential customers with higher ‘fixed costs’ when it is reported that ‘extra’ payments to We Energies related to the Michigan plant so far this year have allowed the utility to earn above the 10.4% maximum allowed profit,” said Carpenter.

On July 9, 2014, Senator Carpenter requested that the chair of the Senate Committee on Government Operation, Public Works, and Telecommunications hold a public hearing on the propriety of public utilities increasing rates and pushing higher fixed costs on residential consumers. Sen. Paul Farrow, the chair of this committee, declined this request.

“Today, I have sent another request to Chairman Farrow to engage legislative oversight on this matter. My constituents want to know why the unelected board members of the PSC appear to put the interests of companies like WE Energies ahead of residents who have to pay the bills,” said Carpenter.

“Governor Walker has appointed the majority of the PSC board members, and the Republican majority in the legislature has the power to hold hearings on this matter. The hardworking residential rate payers in my district want their government to act now stand up for their interests, and not continue to favor the utility special interests,” said Carpenter.

A copy of Sen. Carpenter’s letter Sen. Farrow is attached.

Senator Carpenter’s press releases are available for review at
<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/sen03/news>

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