



ROSA SaskEnergy rate review submission - Nov 25, 2022

SaskEnergy's extreme rate increase proposal to balance their books by charging permanently unaffordable rates to the most vulnerable marginalized tenants in deep poverty, is unsustainable overreach.

Utilities are an essential Vital Service and fundamental human need, legally required for Saskatchewan's livable housing, instead of a commodity to restrict access to, by permanently pricing out of reach of protected populations in poverty.

These already vulnerable tenants particularly have no safe suitable or realistic Saskatchewan options to shelter from the scale of this crown corporation overreach. Other provinces have reasonably saved affordable homes and communities, by prioritizing proactive human rights poverty-affordable rate programs for both renters and assessed homeowners, and protections from inequitable and harmful utility disconnects.

Approving SaskEnergy's proposed permanent rate changes would:

- **drive even more unpayable debts on fixed last resort benefits,**
- **undermine vulnerable tenants' wellbeing, life-sustaining accommodations and sanitation rights, and**
- **unjustly push dangerous displacement into deeper poverty and crown corporation-caused expensive homelessness.**

Low income tenant households of all ages and sizes are impacted by unaffordable utilities more harshly than others, and are more likely to



Renters of Saskatoon and Area (ROSA)

rent in harder to heat aging housing in disrepair, under Saskatchewan's already extreme climate change.

Tenants tend to lack any benefit or realistic access to retrofit improvements to their rental property, without risking an additional commodifying unaffordable rent increase, and displacement or homelessness.

Energy poverty is unequally felt by renter households in poverty, such as single mothers or those living with disabilities like mental health or mobility barriers, or aging in poorly maintained housing.

Please keep in mind Saskatchewan's needs under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 7, calling for universal access to affordable, and reliable energy, in addition to fundamental UN government duties to protect vulnerable and poverty populations in greatest housing insecurity and risk of homelessness (the Adequate Housing right to affordability of utilities).

Renters of Saskatoon and Area (ROSA) ask this Panel to respectfully refuse this proposed increase, and hold SaskEnergy to account for the lack of governmental protections for an equitable livable future for the human rights diversity of us all.

Safe affordable housing and utilities are not commodities, but a Vital Service, human right, and sustainable community need.