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Renewed Ratepayer Relief Plan Designed to Protect Hoosiers from Soaring Utility Bills

Legislative package focuses on accountability, rate reform and lowering energy costs across Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS — With affordability top of mind for state policymakers and Hoosiers, a coalition of consumer and environmental advocacy organizations today announced the release of *Help Hoosiers Now: 2027 Ratepayer Relief Plan*, a comprehensive legislative package designed to lower utility costs, hold monopoly utilities accountable and prioritize Indiana residents over corporate profits.

Hoosiers continue to pay some of the highest energy bills in the Midwest. Nearly nine out of 10 Indiana residents have said they are concerned about rising utility costs, with 57% reporting they are very concerned. Meanwhile, many of Indiana's monopoly utilities continue to ask for rate increases while, in some cases, providing substandard service.

Building on the foundation laid during the 2026 legislative session - where Gov. Mike Braun and lawmakers passed legislation to implement performance-based ratemaking, codify extreme heat shutoff protections and mandate utility assistance programs for income-qualified households—the updated plan addresses systemic regulatory gaps to secure long-term affordability and grid resilience.

Policy Highlights and Key Recommendations

The *Help Hoosiers Now: 2027 Ratepayer Relief Plan* outlines specific, actionable policy proposals for lawmakers in the upcoming legislative session:

- **Utility Accountability and Regulatory Reform:**
    - Prohibits utilities from shifting the costs of political lobbying, public relations, rate case proceedings and extravagant expenses onto customer bills.
    - Strengthens Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) oversight by requiring legislative confirmation of commissioners, mandating regulatory approval for utility mergers and acquisitions and ending profit bonuses awarded for participating in Regional Transmission Organizations (MISO/PJM).
- **Hyperscale Data Center Accountability:** Repeals sales and property tax exemptions for AI data centers and requires these high-demand facilities to pay their full incremental and embedded cost of service, ensuring residential ratepayers do not subsidize industrial power demands.

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- **Cost Tracker and Rate Relief:**
    - Eliminates or scales back automatic bill adjustment mechanisms, such as Construction Work in Progress (CWIP) and Transmission, Distribution, Storage, and System Improvement Charges (TDSIC), ensuring rate adjustments undergo comprehensive regulatory review.
    - Addresses customer fee structures by capping late charges and establishing fuel cost sharing between utilities and consumers.
- **Expanded Clean Energy Access and Efficiency:**
    - Authorizes community energy projects under 5 MW, streamlines statewide energy permitting processes, supports plug-in solar technologies and suggests potential updates for compensation models for customer-owned rooftop solar.
    - Mandates full participation by commercial and industrial users to support already required utility demand-side management and energy efficiency programs to lower total grid demand.

Coalition Statement and Partner Quotes

“Older Hoosiers on limited incomes are struggling to keep up with skyrocketing utility bills, on top of higher costs for groceries, medicine, and health care. This relief plan provides essential protections and accountability measures to ensure older adults can remain safe, healthy and financially secure in their own homes."

Sarah Waddle, AARP Indiana

“Families and the community/faith-based organizations that serve families across our state are facing impossible choices every month, forced to decide between paying sky-high energy bills and affording essential needs like food, medicine, housing or mission related services. Moreover, Indiana's frontline communities bear the heaviest burden of environmental impact from fossil fuels, suffering the worst health and economic consequences. This plan is critical to protecting our communities and ensuring more affordable energy for all Hoosiers.”

Denise Abdul-Rahman, Director of Black Sunlight Sustainability & State Chair of Environmental Climate Justice of the Indiana NAACP

"Indiana ratepayers are getting squeezed from every direction while monopoly utilities pocket record profits and shift the massive energy demands of hyperscale data centers onto the backs of working families. This plan puts consumers first, holding utilities accountable and ensuring everyday Hoosiers aren't forced to foot the bill for corporate expansion."

Kerwin Olson, Citizens Action Coalition

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"Lowering utility bills is the single most pressing issue on the minds of Hoosier families today. Policymakers have an opportunity to lower bills and deliver long-term, affordable energy solutions that will ensure our state is a healthy place to live. We're excited to build on the work that was done last legislative session to bring sustainable, stable relief to Hoosiers."

Megan Robertson, Indiana Conservation Voters

The full legislative proposal is available for review here.

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