



# CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

**For Immediate Release**  
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## STATEMENT FROM CUB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DAVID KOLATA ON ANOTHER RECORD NICOR GAS RATE-HIKE REQUEST

Nicor's rate-hike request is a gut punch to consumers who are in their second consecutive winter of painfully high gas bills. Enough is enough. CUB will review Nicor's excessive request and we will fight every penny the utility can't justify.

In addition to skyrocketing supply prices, Nicor customers are dealing with a utility company that doesn't seem to know when to quit. This is the fourth record rate-hike request the company has asked for since 2017. Nicor Gas customers have seen their delivery rates increase by about 77 percent, or more than \$500 million, in the last five years. That includes the largest gas rate hike in Illinois history: \$240 million in 2021. Now, Nicor--whose parent company rakes in billions of dollars in profits--is back at the table asking for another record rate hike from its customers.

The volatile natural gas prices combined with Nicor's rapid rate hikes are causing hardship for the utility's customers--we hear from far too many consumers across Illinois who are struggling to pay their bills and afford other necessities, like food, medicine and rent.

It's time to rein in the spending of Illinois' gas utilities. And it's time we begin the planning necessary to move to cleaner, more affordable alternatives to natural gas. There are better ways to heat our homes.

### **Background:**

- On Tuesday, Jan. 3, Nicor Gas asked for a record \$321 million rate hike. The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) will rule on the request after an 11-month rate case.
- This was the fourth record rate hike Nicor has requested since 2017. The company initially asked for about \$208 million in 2017, about \$230 million in 2018, and about \$293 million in 2021—all believed to be record requests at the time.
- Nicor has received a total of more than \$500 million in rate hikes since 2018, and has increased delivery rates by about 77 percent, including \$240 million in 2021, believed to be the largest gas rate hike in Illinois history.
- This increase impacts delivery rates, which take up about a third to a half of gas bills. It's what Nicor charges customers to cover the costs of delivering gas to homes—plus a profit.
- Warning: Even customers who pay an alternative gas supplier still pay Nicor's delivery charges. So customers should beware of any sales representative who says they can avoid the rate hike by going with an unregulated supplier. All customers would pay these higher rates.
- Customers having trouble paying their bills should contact their utility to find out about assistance available and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), 1-877-411-9276.
- Nicor is Illinois' largest gas utility, serving 2.2 million residential, public sector and business customers. Its parent company, Southern Co., recorded \$3.6 billion in profits for the first nine months of 2022.

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*CUB is 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 award-winning website, [www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org](http://www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org).*