



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUBLIC FORUM TO ALLOW FRUSTRATED NICOR GAS CUSTOMERS, CONSUMER ADVOCATES TO PROTEST UTILITY'S ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE RECORD RATE HIKE

CHICAGO – As Illinois regulators prepare to hold a public forum on Nicor Gas' attempt to win its fifth rate hike in less than a decade—a \$308.6 million request that would be the highest gas increase in Illinois history—consumer advocates say the customers of Illinois' largest gas utility are frustrated and exhausted by the serial rate hikes.

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is holding a public forum on Nicor Gas' rate-hike request from **7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday, June 9, at the Billie Limacher Bicentennial Park & Theater, 201 W. Jefferson at Bluff St, Joliet, IL 60432.**

In January 2025, Nicor filed for a \$308.6 million increase ([Docket No. 25-0055](#))--what would be a record gas rate hike hitting Illinois consumers this winter. This is Nicor's fifth rate-hike request since 2017. Since then, the utility has raised delivery rates by 114 percent, totaling \$747 million, and its parent, Southern Co., has raked in \$25.2 billion in profits.

Heading into the public forum, advocates pointed to growing customer dissatisfaction, including hundreds of [petition signatures](#) and [ICC public comments](#) people have filed against Nicor's rate-hike request.

"Northern Illinoisans have told us that they oppose the proposed increase from Nicor," said Al Hollenbeck, Volunteer State President of AARP Illinois. "This hike, on top of several other utility hikes in recent years, disproportionately affects older adults on fixed incomes, who are already struggling to keep up with the ever-growing cost of living in the state. They simply cannot afford higher gas bills and AARP is committed to advocating on their behalf against this proposed rate hike."

"Nicor Gas customers have endured serial rate hikes from the state's largest gas utility—and they are fed up," said Mardi Klevs, a Nicor customer and volunteer board member for the Citizens Utility Board (CUB). "In the latest money-grab—the company's fifth rate-hike request in less than a decade—customers can see Nicor is trying to make them pay for an excessive profit rate for shareholders as well as extravagant executive bonuses, and they're telling us 'Enough is enough!'"

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The Illinois Attorney General's Office and consumer advocates such as AARP Illinois, Illinois PIRG and the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) have argued that Nicor's rate-hike request is unjust and unreasonable. Together, consumer advocates say the request is more than double what the company can justify under the law. They have uncovered more than \$150 million in overcharges, including excessive executive bonuses and an exorbitant profit rate for their shareholders

The ICC will issue a final ruling on Nicor's rate-hike request in November. If approved, Nicor's rate hike would increase average gas bills by about 9 percent, or about \$7.50 a month/\$90 a year, and push the utility's total increases to more than \$1 billion in less than a decade.

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AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. To learn about AARP's work in Illinois, visit www.aarp.org/IL or [@AARPIllinois](https://twitter.com/AARPIllinois).

Illinois PIRG is an advocate for the public interest. We speak out for the public and stand up to special interests on problems that affect the public's health, safety and wellbeing.

For more than 40 years the **Citizens Utility Board (CUB)** has been 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 helped save consumers more than \$20 billion by blocking rate hikes and securing refunds. For more information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline at 1-800-669-5556 or visit CUB's website, www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org.