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**NEWS RELEASE: STATE, LOCAL ELECTEDS RELEASE LETTER OPPOSING
PEOPLES GAS RATE HIKE, AS CHICAGOANS STRUGGLE WITH RISING UTILITY BILLS**

CHICAGO – Thirty-eight alderpersons and state legislators representing Chicago sent a [letter](#) to state regulators Tuesday opposing the Peoples Gas rate hike. The letter calls on the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) to “oppose Peoples Gas’ proposed rate hike, reject its request for an excessive profit rate, and continue to pursue reforms to its Pipe Retirement Program (PRP).”

The large number of city and state officials taking coordinated action demonstrates a particularly strong backlash to surging heating bills in Chicago. As Peoples Gas continues to compile record profits, fueled by its costly and ineffective pipe replacement program, roughly one in five Chicago heating customers are perennially in debt to Peoples Gas.

"As working families are facing an affordability crisis, Peoples Gas is trying to squeeze more money out of them to increase its profit," said 49th Ward Alderwoman [Maria Hadden](#), **Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection and Energy**. "This is an unconscionable ask, given the record profits these corporations are already raking in, against the backdrop of climate change-related disasters compounding each year."

In January, Peoples Gas filed a \$205 million rate hike, the first since its record-breaking rate hike in 2023. In July, Peoples Gas lowered its request by \$58 million. The utility’s troubled pipe replacement program is a major driver of rate hikes, with Peoples Gas delivery rates effectively doubling since the program began in 2011. Meanwhile, more than 160,000 Peoples Gas residential customers were more than 30 days past due on their accounts in August, collectively in debt by more than \$90 million, according to [data](#) the utility filed with the ICC.

"Something is profoundly wrong when one in five customers is in debt to Peoples Gas," said 20th District State Senator [Graciela Guzman](#). "I won't stand by while Peoples Gas attempts to once again increase my constituents' monthly bills to pad corporate profits."

In November 2023, the ICC paused the utility’s pipe replacement program and initiated an investigation. At the conclusion of that investigation in February 2025, the ICC [ordered](#) Peoples Gas to reform its approach and retire all remaining iron pipes by the end of 2034.

Peoples Gas presented its new plan for pipe retirement in this rate case. Based on evidence in the rate case that Peoples Gas’ plan will produce only one penny of benefit for every dollar spent, Illinois PIRG is calling on the ICC to end its retirement mandate.

"The evidence is clear. At best, accelerated pipe replacement fails to improve gas system safety. More likely, it undermines safety," said Illinois PIRG Associate [Levi Orgas](#). "Wasteful spending by Peoples Gas has led to record-breaking rate hikes and threatens to lock Chicagoans into paying for polluting infrastructure for decades after it becomes obsolete."

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The letter highlights how, while customers face escalating bills, Peoples Gas has sent record profits to its out of state corporate parent in seven out of the last nine years. Peoples Gas' annual profits have increased by more than 400% since its pipe replacement program began, and is now asking the ICC to raise its profit rate to 10.1%, authorizing \$320 million in annual profits, all paid for by customers.

"It is a hardship to be a Peoples Gas customer, thanks to years of outrageous utility spending, serial rate hikes and escalating bills," said **CUB Communications Director Jim Chilsen**. "And while Chicagoans suffer under a mountain of debt, Peoples Gas has laughed all the way to the bank, raking in record profits. We join elected officials in calling on state regulators to once again rein in this company and slash its unjust and unreasonable rate hike."

An administrative law judge will issue a draft order in the rate case next week. The Commission is expected to make a final decision in November.

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Illinois PIRG is an advocate for consumers, advancing solutions to problems that affect our health, our safety and well-being.

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**.