



or to be rendered shall be just and reasonable. Every unjust or unreasonable charge demanded or received for such product or commodity or service is unlawful.

- 2) Every public utility shall furnish and maintain such adequate, efficient, just, and reasonable service, instrumentalities, equipment and facilities, including telephone facilities, as defined in Section 54.1 of the Civil Code, as are necessary to promote the safety, health, comfort and convenience of its patrons, employees and the public.
- 3) All rules made by a public utility affecting or pertaining to its charges or service to the public shall be just and reasonable.

It is the CPUC's job to authorize an IOU to collect only those rates for service that are just and reasonable.

Nonetheless, the rates charged by the state's electric IOUs have risen considerably over the past decade or so. Today California's rates for each unit of electricity are among the very highest in the nation.

The author describes these rate increases as "unchecked" and asserts rates could be reduced through "rigorous review and reform of non-cost-effective public purpose programs, audits of wildfire mitigation spending to eliminate unreasonable costs, and optimization of the California Climate Credit."

Somewhat separately, the bill directs the CPUC to assess verified restitution shortfalls for victims of utility-caused wildfires that occurred prior to July 12, 2019, and recommend mechanisms for electrical corporations to fully and fairly compensate those victims in a timely manner, without shifting those costs to ratepayers. The author describes such restitution as "long-overdue justice for wildfire survivors." Likely so.

Victims of utility-caused wildfires want even more and have suggested amendments to this bill to the committee that, as summarized by one dogged advocate, (1) ensure there is a path to full restitution for Pacific Gas and Electric fire victims, (2) sets a foundation and precedent for ensuring equitable restitution for all fire victims and (3) establishes a framework within existing CPUC processes and those established through the California Wildfire Fund to reduce costs for administration and streamline victim restitution processes.

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