

# **ACTION KIT: Ask ACC for more clean energy and support for just and equitable transition in APS rate case**

**BACKGROUND:** Arizona Public Service (APS) filed for a rate increase with the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) that would result in an annual net rate increase of \$460 million, which would result in a net 13.6% bill increase for ratepayers.

In this rate case, APS asks ratepayers to pay for the continued operation of its polluting, outdated coal-fired power plants, even though those plants are no longer economical to operate and are more costly than clean energy alternatives. Since the last rate case, APS has spent hundreds of millions of dollars in capital expenses and operations and maintenance costs at its fossil-fueled power plants, including the coal-fired Four Corners Generating Station, where APS has just announced it will postpone a switch to reduced seasonal operations, and the coal-fired Cholla Power Plant. APS proposes to spend hundreds of millions more to keep Four Corners operating until 2031. APS can save ratepayers money and reduce pollution by retiring the Four Corners Power Plant prior to 2031 and replacing it with lower-cost renewable energy. Ratepayers should not have to pay for APS's irresponsible spending to keep Four Corners running until 2031.

APS has also doubled down on fossil gas, spending over \$100 million on its Sundance and Redhawk gas plants. On top of its existing coal and gas, APS is also proposing to add even more new gas through an upcoming "Request for Proposals," even though renewables and storage are cheaper and more reliable.

Unlike Tucson Electric Power, APS is requesting approval of coal community transition (CCT) funding for communities impacted by coal-fired power plant closures. APS proposes \$106.5 million in funding over nine years to support coal community transition, including for the Navajo Nation, Hopi Tribe, and the areas around Joseph City where the Cholla Power Plant is located. This funding is urgently needed to help these communities transition from coal to clean energy, although it is not enough to meet the need.

Our key asks of APS and the ACC are:

- APS should retire the Four Corners Power Plant prior to 2031 and replace it with lower-cost renewable energy, which would save ratepayers money and reduce pollution.
- Ratepayers should not have to pay for APS’s irresponsible, unjustified spending to keep the costly, dirty Four Corners Power Plant running until 2031.
- APS should switch Four Corners to seasonal operations in 2023 as originally planned.
- APS should close Cholla Power Plant by no later than 2025 as scheduled.
- The ACC should approve funding for Coal Community Transition for communities impacted by coal plant retirements. APS’s proposed funding of \$106.5 million CCT funding proposal is an important first step and should be approved by the Commission.
- APS should increase investments in energy efficiency and demand-side management (DSM) programs that save ratepayers money.

**HERE ARE FOUR THINGS YOU CAN DO:**

- (1) Speak at one of the public comment sessions either telephonically or in person or both.**
- (2) Submit written comments to the docket.**
- (3) Share on social media and/or share the information with a friend.**
- (4) Write a letter to the editor pointing out the concerns with this rate case.**

**(1) SPEAK AT ONE OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT SESSIONS.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>June 1, 2023</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.</b> to 4:00 p.m., or until the last caller is finished speaking, whichever comes first
<b>June 7, 2023</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b> to 8:30 p.m., or until the last caller is finished speaking, whichever comes first
<b>June 20, 2023</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b> to 1:00 p.m., or until the last caller is finished speaking, whichever comes first

<b>June 20, 2023</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b> to 8:30 p.m., or until the last caller is finished speaking, whichever comes first
<b>July 31, 2023</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b> to 1:00 p.m., or until the last caller is finished speaking, whichever comes first

**We would especially like to have a strong turnout for the June 7th meeting.**

To attend in person, go to 1200 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007 and enter from the back or north side of the building. You will need to go through security to enter.

To speak in person, either complete a **"Request to Speak" form** on one of the kiosks in the lobby at the ACC or fill out a paper slip or use your computer or mobile device ahead of time and request to speak via the ACC Portal here

<https://efiling.azcc.gov/cases>

To provide telephonic comments, phone 1-877-309-3457, then enter the passcode **801972877#**.

**The comments are usually limited to three minutes in length.**

## **(2) SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO THE DOCKET**

- a)** Be sure to include the docket number at the top of your comments – **Docket Number E-01345A-22-0144**
- b)** Use the talking points listed below for your comments, plus include any specific reasons you are concerned about this rate case. Tell your story!
- c)** You can mail your comments to: Arizona Corporation Commission, Consumer Services Section, 1200 West Washington, Phoenix, AZ 85007
- d)** You can submit your comments electronically or ask us to drop them off for you. To submit a public comment, go to <https://efiling.azcc.gov/cases>, Click on "Make A Public Comment in a Docket." Complete your information and click "Submit."

## **Talking Points**

## Personal Financial Burden

1. **The proposed 13.6% rate increase is too much** following a time in which we have lost income as Arizona residents survived the hardship of decreased wages and lost jobs during a global pandemic.
2. **Bill increases have come too often** – this is the second proposed rate increase in just three years..

## Continued Spending on Dirty, Expensive Coal Plants

3. **APS cannot keep charging ratepayers for its dirty, expensive coal.** APS is continuing to spend money on the dirty, expensive, and outdated coal-fired Four Corners and Cholla power plants, and is seeking to recover those expenses from ratepayers. The costs to keep operating APS's coal plants exceeds the costs of alternatives like renewable energy. APS fails to justify those high costs, and relies on flawed and outdated analysis. Ratepayers should not have to pay for APS's imprudent spending on fossil fuels.
4. **APS can save ratepayers money by speeding up the retirement of Four Corners Power Plant and switching to cleaner and cheaper renewable power sources.** Four Corners Power Plant is slated to retire in 2031, but an earlier retirement date can save ratepayers tens of millions and perhaps hundreds of millions of dollars, while keeping that additional carbon and other air pollutants out of the air.
5. **Renewables are cheaper and cleaner than coal.** Clean energy resources like solar, wind, and battery storage are cheaper, cleaner, and more reliable than APS's aging coal plants.
6. **Across the nation, coal use is swiftly declining.** By propping up polluting, toxic coal-fired power plants, APS isn't preparing for a future that prioritizes a transition to clean energy – holding Arizona back.

## Environmental Justice and Coal Community Transition

7. **APS is asking ratepayers to pay for dirty, expensive fossil fuel infrastructure that pollutes communities and harms public health.**
  - a. APS should not be burning coal or gas, or proposing new gas plants when we have a climate crisis.
  - b. APS is proposing to provide \$106.5 million in funding for coal community transition, which is an important first step, but not enough to meet the needs of impacted communities. The ACC should support APS's proposed funding and the requests of the Hopi Tribe and Navajo Nation, as well as the grassroots

Indigenous groups who have requested a just and equitable transition for these coal-impacted communities.

- c. The burning of fossil fuels continues to occur at the cost of the environment and health of communities of color. Coal plants emit thousands of tons of harmful pollutants that pose serious public health concerns, like increased asthma attacks, bronchitis, and heart attacks. Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities bear a disproportionate air pollution burden, and cleaner alternatives must be prioritized.<sup>2</sup>

## Energy Efficiency

### 8. APS should be increasing investments in energy efficiency, which can reduce customer bills.

- a. APS has not invested enough in cost-effective programs to increase energy efficiency and reduce peak energy demand.
- b. Lack of energy efficiency in homes forces higher energy costs, disproportionately affecting Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and those of low and fixed incomes. These higher costs can lead to households going without needed electricity, which is uncomfortable and unsafe.
- c. Investing in energy efficiency helps keep electric bills lower and as noted above can lower energy burden on those with low incomes.
- d. Energy efficiency programs are the lowest-cost energy option available.
- e. We need to invest in what works. When we invest in efficiency, all electricity customers pay less than it would cost to generate that same power from more expensive alternatives.
- f. By eliminating energy waste, we reduce the need for APS to generate power from more expensive alternatives.
- g. Energy Efficiency is also one of the few ways customers can reduce the cost of their utility bills.

### 3) Share information on Social Media and with a friend.

[Link to graphic](#)

[Bit.ly Link to Add Up](#)

Twitter
@APSFYI customers may see an increased utility bill in their future as it proposes a 13.6% rate increase that comes on the heels of hardship for communities contending with raising costs.

Take action so APS doesn't keep customers on the hook for its fossil fuels:  
<https://bit.ly/RateCaseAPS>

## Facebook

**ACTION ALERT:** During a time where our communities are contending with raising prices and lost income after the pandemic, Arizona Public Service (APS) is proposing a rate increase that would spike customer bills by 13.6% to prolong expensive and outdated power plants that dirty our air and damage our lungs instead of increasing investments in #EnergyEfficiency.

APS can't keep customers on the hook for its fossil fuel! Tell APS how this rate increase would impact you and your community by submitting a public comment or speaking at a public comment hearing. Click the link to learn more: <https://bit.ly/RateCaseAPS>

## Instagram

Are you an Arizona Public Service (APS) customer? If so, did you know that APS is proposing a rate increase that would spike your bill by 13.6%? Tell APS that it can't keep customers on the hook to prolong expensive and outdated power plants that dirty our air and damage our lungs by submitting a public comment, or joining the public comment hearing. Link in bio to learn more!

### 4) Write and submit a letter to the editor. See information below and use talking points above.

#### General LTE Guidance:

Keep it brief	Focus your letter on one point and don't bring up other issues in your writing. Stick to your point. Do not repeat your opponent's arguments or take the myth/fact approach. Restating a contrary position only serves to put it in print once again.
	Newspapers care about what affects the people who subscribe to their newspapers, and they know a form letter when they see one. <b>Speak from the heart</b> about why <i>you care</i> about this issue.

Make it local and original	Do not copy talking points or materials verbatim. Use your own voice and story.  Show how your issue will have a local impact, or how it will affect you or your family.
Make it timely	Relate your letter to an article or issue that has been printed recently or a current event. If no other article on the issue is available, begin your LTE with why you are writing about this now.
Include your contact information	Full name, address, phone number, email in the body of an email or form but not in the LTE itself.

**Where to publish your LTE:**

Name	Type	Word Limit	Submission	Notes
Arizona Republic	State	200	<a href="#">Submit Letter Here</a>	
Arizona Daily Sun	N AZ	250	<a href="#">Submit Letter Here</a>	
Arizona Capitol Times	State	200	<a href="#">Submit Letter Here</a>	
Arizona Mirror	State	200	<a href="#">Email</a>	
The Daily Courier	Prescott	275	<a href="#">Submit Letter Here</a>	
Yuma Daily Sun	Yuma	350	<a href="#">Submit Letter Here</a>	