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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

FAIR CALIFORNIA COALITION OBJECTS TO LAST-MINUTE CPUC GIVEAWAYS TO PG&E

Coalition demands accountability at the California Public Utilities Commission rate hearing scheduled for today

San Francisco, CA— FAIR California is calling on Californians to urge the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to resist PG&E's demand for yet another hefty increase in utility bills–of roughly $300 annually for the average residential ratepayer–at today's CPUC hearing. These proposed increases come on top of three years in which California residents and small businesses have struggled to pay PG&E bills, increasing at three times the rate of inflation. Residents and business owners among the 16 million people served by the nation's largest utility can voice their concerns by emailing CPUC commissioners directly through the FAIR California website at FairCa.gov. The public can also participate by calling the CPUC and following the procedures described by the CPUC, but the wait can be considerable.

Since the hearing on the rate increase proposal hearing was deferred two weeks ago, PG&E lobbyists have engaged in several private meetings with CPUC commissioners–with whom the company has long had a cozy relationship—to lobby them for another $1.8 billion increase in ratepayer revenue. The leading CPUC proposal–the Alternate Proposed Decision (APD) by Commissioner John Reynolds–has already been revised twice, including only a few days ago. Commissioner Reynold's APD appears considerably more generous to PG&E than another alternative proposed by administrative law judges, by hundreds of millions of dollars. PG&E demands even more–by several billion dollars– in its own proposal, which would hike residential bills by an average of $68 per month by 2026.

FAIR California urges the CPUC to reject the PG&E general rate case (GRC) proposal, as well the recent modifications to the Reynolds APD that further burden ratepayers. Although FAIR

California expects that the CPUC will ultimately grant substantial rate increases in this GRC, it urges a deferral of the GRC determination until the public sees greater transparency and accountability over PG&E expenditures. Specifically, FAIR California demands that the CPUC disallow any increase in rates that directly or indirectly funds executive compensation or any other component of "Administrative and General expenses," regardless of whether those funds are deemed "shareholder" or "ratepayer" funds. The group also urges that the CPUC conduct a public reasonableness review (pursuant to Ca. Pub. Util. Code §§ 451 and 455) of several categories of excessive expenditures that the group has highlighted in recent media– such as Patti Poppe's executive compensation of more than $60 million in the last two years, and several million spent weekly on TV commercials to an audience that is already legally required to use PG&E. FAIR California seeks to have PG&E satisfactorily and publicly identify the ultimate revenue sources of these expenditures, and to have the CPUC determine whether these expenditures serve the company's and ratepayers' best interests, including:

a. communications-related activity, including but not limited to TV and internet advertising, paid media, memberships in industry groups, and lobbying;
b. executive pay, bonuses, or other executive compensation; and
c. political contributions or other campaign-related activity.

FAIR California's call for accountability has been echoed by elected officials and many partners:

> "For decades, PG&E has reaped enormous profits while tragedy after tragedy occurred on its watch," said **San Francisco City Attorney David Chiu.** "PG&E cannot stick working-class Californians with the bill for infrastructure projects the company should have completed long ago. At every turn, PG&E raises rates, increases executive pay, does not provide reliable service, undermines public power, and endangers Californians. At some point, we have to say enough is enough."

> "As investor-owned utilities like PG&E seek to increase their rates, let's not forget they aren't the only options," said **San Francisco Mayor London N. Breed.** "We have successful public power utilities up and down our state, including San Francisco's CleanPowerSF, that have provided cleaner, more reliable, and more affordable power for decades. Our power rates are more transparently structured with high-quality and dependability in mind. Thank you to the FAIR California Coalition for working hard to demand accountability and fair rates for all Californians."

Leaders of partner organizations who can also speak to media about these issues include:

- **Corey Smith,** Executive Director of Housing Action Coalition; Cell: 925-360-5290 Office: 415-300-0967; corey@housingactioncoalition.org

- **Dr. Matthew Ajiake,** CEO of SF African American Chamber of Commerce; Cell: 415-424-5577; Office: 415-749-6400; majiake@sonikacorporation.com
- **Michael Murray,** Director of Business Integration, AARP California; Cell: 916-717-2837; Office: 626-585-2601; MMurray@aarp.org

About FAIR California
FAIR California is a coalition of organizations representing workers, small businesses, environmental advocates, consumers, renters, affordability advocates, and older adults. We share a common demand for greater accountability from large, for-profit electric and gas utilities amid rapidly-rising energy bills that severely burden residents and small businesses throughout California.

FAIR California Principles
We urge greater:
- accountability of investor-owned utilities to ratepayers for their expenditures;
- restraint in increases of utility bills on struggling residents and businesses;
- responsibility for the ways in which for-profit utilities' self-serving decisions exacerbate the affordability crisis experienced by our community, including:
  - obstructing construction of affordable housing and other essential infrastructure by delaying connections to electric power;
  - inflating the cost of fire insurance, and in some cases, making fire insurance inaccessible altogether;
  - increasing utility bills at a pace well in excess of the inflation rate; and
  - consuming public expenditures for emergency response to wildfires and power shut-offs resulting from failed utility infrastructure;
- focus of expenditures on delivering return to ratepayers, as demonstrated by safety, service, environmental sustainability,and systemwide resilience
- transparency about the source of funding used for corporate advertising, communications, advocacy, and other such expenditures;
- competition among utilities to reduce costs and improve customer service, including the expansion of community choice aggregation in California;
- transparency and competition in bidding and contracting processes of capital projects to accelerate and reduce the cost of undergrounding and other critical safety projects;
- assurance that PG&E will be held to its commitment to make whole those families who have lost their homes and livelihoods in wildfires resulting from PG&E's recklessness.

To learn more about FAIR California and to join the movement, please visit **FAIRCA.org**.

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