



May 9, 2025

The Honorable Howard Watts
Chair
Committee on Growth and Infrastructure
Nevada State Assembly
Carson City, Nevada

Re: Request to Oppose SB417

Dear Chair Watts:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to Senate Bill 417 (SB417). The Committee must prioritize ratepayers and reject SB417. This legislation runs counter to the state's climate goals and protecting ratepayers. It would move the authority to approve alternative utility rate structures from the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN) to the Legislature, undermining transparency, public participation, and regulatory accountability.

Chispa Nevada, a program of the League of Conservation Voters, builds the power of low-income Latine families to achieve climate justice, community health, and environmental protection. One of the top concerns we hear from our members—week after week—is the burden of unaffordable and unpredictable utility bills. Across Nevada, families are being forced to make impossible choices between keeping the lights on or paying for food, rent, or medication.

We are deeply concerned that SB417 would make the situation worse. By bypassing the PUCN's established and open regulatory process, this bill would allow Southwest Gas and other utilities to fast-track rate structures and infrastructure investments with less oversight and little to no input from the public. At a time when Nevadans are calling for more transparency and accountability from utilities, SB417 does the opposite.

SB417 is a proposal that would instead allow utilities to lock in long-term gas investments -- many of which would raise costs and worsen air pollution in communities already facing the highest energy burdens. Customers have no choice in their utility provider. If this bill passes, we risk locking in higher rates and more fossil fuel dependence for years, without giving our communities a real voice in the process. Nevadans deserve a regulatory process that puts people first—one that's transparent, equitable, and focused on affordability.

SB 417 moves us away from those goals. We urge you to reject SB417.

Sincerely,

Audrey Peral
Program Director
Chispa Nevada