

Idaho Community Action Network

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For Immediate Release

Wednesday, March 31, 2004

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“IPUC: PULL THE PLUG ON IDAHO POWER’S RATE INCREASE!”**ICAN MEMBERS PRESENT REPORT, TESTIMONY AGAINST RATE HIKE**

Boise, ID.—Idaho Community Action Network (ICAN) members turned out in force today to present the Public Utilities Commission with 19 reasons to reject Idaho Power’s application for a rate increase, including a 19 percent residential rate increase. Forty ICAN members arrived at the PUC public hearing on Idaho Power’s proposed rate increase. Their message: Pull the plug on Idaho Power’s outrageous request.

“I was shocked when I saw the things Idaho Power is asking the ratepayers to cover,” exclaimed Karen McWilliams, ICAN member from Boise. “My sister and I are struggling to pay all our bills on \$585 a month, and Idaho Power CEO Jan Packwood, who makes \$800,000 and owns two homes, wants us to pay his club dues for him? How can they be so greedy?”

In its application, Idaho Power asked the PUC to raise its annual revenue by \$85,561,910, an average increase of 17.7 percent, including a 19 percent increase in residential rates. After reviewing Idaho Power’s proposal, PUC staff recommended a revenue increase of only \$14,896,384, a 3.08 percent increase over current levels. In reaching that recommendation, the PUC staff identified over \$70 million in items that Idaho Power had inappropriately asked the ratepayers to pay for.

As part of the 19 percent increase, Idaho Power asked the PUC to allow it to raise monthly customer charges from \$2.51 to \$10. The PUC has never approved a customer charge as high as \$10. Such an increase would have a disproportionately heavy impact on low income households.

“I’ll give Idaho Power this much – they’ve got quite the nerve,” said Retta Green, ICAN member from Wilder. “I’m trying to scrape by and pay bills on \$596 a month, and Idaho Power has the nerve to plead poverty and go in to the PUC asking for an \$86 million increase in their revenues.” Green is retired after working 22 years as a long haul truck driver and eight as a CNA. She added, “This is just Robin Hood in reverse!”

In addition to testifying against the rate increase, ICAN released a report, “Pull the Plug on Idaho Power’s Rate Increase: Idaho Families Need Rate Relief, Not Rate Hikes.” The report details the harmful impact a rate increase would have on Idaho’s low income families. The report also contains series of short vignettes detailing the experiences of Idaho families confronting rising electricity rates and unfair treatment by Idaho Power.

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