

From: [Christopher Deckert](#)
To: [City Recorder](#)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed 1.5% Utility Rate Adjustment
Date: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 9:29:00 AM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

To the City council of Lebanon:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed 1.5% utility rate adjustment for stormwater drainage, water, and wastewater services. While the average increase of \$1.89 per month may seem minimal on the surface, it is important to consider the broader context of economic hardships currently affecting our community.

Many residents of Lebanon are already grappling with the financial impacts of rising living costs, including skyrocketing housing prices, increased grocery bills, and inflation that has affected everyday expenses. The cumulative effect of these economic pressures has left many families struggling to make ends meet. Adding even a small increase to utility bills could exacerbate these challenges for vulnerable households.

Furthermore, it is crucial to recognize that this proposed increase is not occurring in isolation. In recent years, Lebanon has already seen several adjustments to utility rates. For instance, the water and wastewater rates were increased by 3.03% last year, and there have been prior hikes in stormwater fees as well. These repeated increases place a substantial burden on residents, particularly those with fixed incomes or lower wages.

Furthermore, at last year's city council meeting regarding this very subject, a staff report indicated that the "rate adjustment will cover increases in operational costs and help offset the increased cost for constructing capital projects." Yet here we are again, being "told" we need to pay more.

Additionally, consider the impact of rising costs in other utility sectors. For example, in January 2024, the average retail price of electricity in Oregon was \$11.40 cents per kilowatt-hour, reflecting a staggering 26% increase since January 2020.

I don't think I need to elaborate on the fluctuating costs of fuel or again the significant rise in grocery prices that families are facing daily. These factors further highlight the financial strain on our community and underscore the need for careful consideration before implementing any additional utility rate increases.

Given the current economic climate and the financial strain many families are experiencing, I urge you to reconsider the necessity of this rate adjustment. Instead, I encourage exploring alternative solutions that do not further burden our community members during these challenging times.

If alternative solutions are being explored, myself and the community would appreciate a better understanding of what alternatives you have explored, and how they may impact this decision.

Thank you for considering my perspective. I hope we can work together as a community to find a more equitable approach to managing our utility needs without imposing additional financial strain on the residents of Lebanon, Oregon.

Sincerely,

Christopher Deckert and family.
A life long Lebanon community family.