



# NEWS RELEASE

# Alliance for Fair Utilities

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

October 30, 2014

Contact: Jackie Ivy, Alliance for Fair Utilities, (414) 242-1265

## **One Hundred African American Community Leaders Oppose We Energies' Unfair Rate Hike Proposal**

**MILWAUKEE:** Today more community leaders called on the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) and community members to oppose We Energies' proposed rate changes. We Energies has proposed *almost doubling* the fixed fee every customer has to pay just for having electricity, from \$9 to \$16 a month. Today's "Community Journal" includes a list of 100 African-American community leaders calling on Milwaukee residents to call the PSC and ask them to reject We Energies' proposal.

"The community must demand tougher oversight of the We Energies regulated monopoly. With such high profits and shocking executive compensation, We Energies should not be allowed any more rate increases by the PSC," explained Jackie Ivy, who helped organize the effort. "Too often our community is overlooked and not considered when important decisions like this are made, which will affect all of us."

One of the big concerns about this proposal is that it will more greatly impact low-income members of the community who already struggle to pay their bills. "Our families are concerned about the effect this proposed rate increase will have on those who will have a harder time paying a higher electricity bill and who would normally reduce their electrical use if struggling to pay the electricity bill one month," explained Reverend Willie Briscoe from MICAH, one of the names on the letter.

"While the rest of us were suffering job losses and a recession, We Energies used its monopoly status to keep and grow its profits. Our electric prices are some of the highest in the Midwest, and this change would give us less ability to save money on our already-high electric bills. We are calling on the PSC to do its job and protect us from unfair, unjust rate changes," concluded Ivy.

###

*Alliance for Fair Utilities is a newly-formed coalition of more than a dozen faith, health, environmental, and justice groups concerned about the impacts of increasing the fixed fee portion of electricity bills.*