



Iowa Energy

**RATEPAYER  
BILL OF  
RIGHTS**

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# Section 1: Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency is typically the least-cost clean energy resource. Energy waste can result in increased costs and pollution from unnecessary generation. As electricity use increases, wise energy use can help keep costs reasonable and make homes more comfortable, healthy, and resilient. In addition to providing good local jobs, energy efficiency programs benefit our communities by keeping energy dollars local. Efficiency and demand response can also reduce energy use at peak hours, helping avoid costs related to system expansion to meet ever-higher loads.

**1. Ratepayers have a right to equitable access to energy efficiency programs that are cost-effective, accountable, and produce measureable results.**

**2. Ratepayers have a right to energy efficiency information.**

*This includes the efficiency of consumer products, information about historical energy bills at a property before signing a lease, a customer's own energy use patterns, and other information that helps customers make efficient choices.*

*Information dissemination should include robust efforts to ensure underserved populations and communities have equal access to information.*

**3. Ratepayers have a right to equitable access to efficiency programs that work for them.**

*All Iowans should have access to energy efficiency programs regardless of home ownership status, housing type, income, utility provider, geographic location (urban or rural), customer size/class, race, ethnicity, country of origin, age, or gender.*

*Energy-burdened ratepayers should be supported in reducing energy costs through efficiency programs, policies, and financial mechanisms that work for them, whether they own their home or rent.*

*Energy efficiency policy and programs should recognize and work to resolve the differing interests of renters and landlords so that renters have access to the comfort and economic improvements of the programs.*

*Large and small businesses, and individuals in every part of Iowa, should have equal access to efficiency programs, technical assistance, and the benefits of cost savings.*

*Local governments, schools, places of worship, other nonprofits and tax-exempt entities that are not eligible for tax incentives should have access to other energy efficiency incentives and programs.*

**4. Ratepayers have a right to receive quality, comprehensive technical assistance provided by qualified local professionals and organizations funded through the rate-payer funded energy efficiency programs.**

## Section 2: Customer-Owned Generation

Just as energy efficiency helps to keep dollars in our local communities, local, decentralized generation of clean energy can do the same, allowing lowans to reduce their energy bills and contribute to a more sustainable and resilient energy system.

**1. Ratepayers have the right to generate, consume, store, and export renewable energy.**

*The interconnection process with the utility should be timely, transparent, and subject to reasonable safety requirements and reasonable fees.*

*Utilities should provide fair credit for power exported to the utility, recognizing the value, both the costs and benefits, of customer-owned renewable energy generation.*

*Utilities should not consider the use of renewable energy sources by a customer as a basis for establishing discriminatory rates or charges for any service.*

*Customer-owned generation resources should be a priority in planning and acquisition of energy resources by an electric utility.*

**2. Ratepayers have the right to enter into behind-the-meter agreements with third parties.**

**3. Ratepayers have the right to access their consumption and generation data.**

**4. Ratepayers have the right to equitable access to incentives and financing mechanisms for renewable customer-owned generation that work for all customer types and regardless of taxable status.**

## Section 3: Community-Focused Clean Energy Generation & Distribution

Community participation and ownership are ways to capture additional economic benefits and influence the direction of the local energy system. Community participation and ownership structures should be incentivized as a key part of the transition to clean energy.

1. **Ratepayers have the right to participate in community-based clean energy generation such as community solar.**

*Community solar projects should be structured to allow access to ratepayers of all income levels, including low- to moderate-income households.*

2. **Ratepayers have the right to transition to a publicly owned energy system or utility.**
3. **Ratepayers have the right to create micro-grids within their communities.**

*Micro-grids increase community resiliency by allowing communities to draw on local renewable resources and storage to supply critical community services in the event of an otherwise widespread energy outage.*

## Section 4: Consumer Protection, Transparency, and Public Health

Consumer protection and transparency measures are more critical than ever as the clean energy transition advances. Energy policies should be designed to ensure utilities act in the best interest of their customers, the communities they serve, and the environment. People should not lose their homes, health, or livelihoods due to energy generation or energy bills.

1. Ratepayers have the right to affordable and reliable energy.
2. Ratepayers have the right to a resilient energy system that has the fewest negative impacts on the environment and consumers, with a focus on distributed, clean, renewable generation.
3. Ratepayers have a right to clear, appropriate, accessible avenues for redress and conflict resolution.
4. Ratepayers have a right to continued service during all disputes.
5. Ratepayers have a right to privacy and consumer data protection.
6. Ratepayers have a right to fair billing, and to not be unduly charged or discriminated against when applying for service.

*For example, a new customer should not be responsible for unpaid bills of a previous resident. A credit check should not be required for utility service.*

7. Ratepayers have a right to clear and transparent rate and billing information.
8. Ratepayers have a right to payment assistance programs that facilitate reliable access to energy year-round.
9. Ratepayers have a right to transparency of utility energy costs and value of infrastructure assessments in legal municipalization projects.

## Section 4: Consumer Protection, Transparency, and Public Health *cont.*

**10. Ratepayers have a right to be protected against utility shut-offs both during the winter months and the months of extreme heat to protect the health and wellbeing of customers.**

**11. Ratepayers have the right to environmental and public health protections, including:**

*safe siting of energy generation resources;*

*avoidance and remediation of environmental pollution caused by energy generation;*

*financial compensation for harms done to communities from energy generation.*