

## PSC Bill Strengthens Voice of Utility Customers

Written by GOV Press Wisconsin  
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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/utility-shut-off-s5.jpg>



***New Law, signed by Governor Thursday, provides stable funding for Citizens Utility Board***

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers signed into law Assembly Bill (AB) 27, now Wisconsin Act 24. The new law will provide a stable funding source for the Citizens Utility Board (CUB), Wisconsin's only advocate for residential and small business utility customers. CUB is an independent, non-profit group that represents customers in rate case and utility construction proceedings before the Public Service Commission (PSC). Previously, CUB relied on funding from a PSC grant, which was subject to approval in Wisconsin's biennial budget.



“Giving CUB the means to have a more equal footing in proceedings before the PSC results in greater representation for Wisconsin consumers, and ultimately leads to lower utility bills,” said Gov. Evers. “This law will ensure that CUB’s funding will be more stable and sustainable, and will allow CUB to remain focused on its mission of advocating for Wisconsin families and small businesses who don’t have an army of attorneys at their disposal.”

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“Without CUB’s active participation as an intervenor in PSC cases, there would be a lack of a counterbalance to the utilities—leaving residential and small business consumers without an equal advocate,” said Rebecca Cameron Valcq, Chairperson of the PSC. “We have to base our decisions on the evidence presented to us. This will make that information more robust and complete, and ensure the voice of customers is represented.”

[AB 27](#), now Wisconsin Act 24, contains multiple technical changes to state statutes affecting the PSC, including:

- Allowing the PSC to authorize up to \$900,000 annually in funding to CUB from Wisconsin’s investor-owned utilities; and
- Correcting an unintended result of a 2017 law encouraging utility settlements in rate cases which created a timing mismatch between when CUB began working on cases and when it could request funding to support its work by allowing CUB to hire experts and retain staff prior to participating in settlement proceedings.