



Corrected testimony HB26-1013_RRice

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To: "committees.lcs.ga@coleg.gov" <committees.lcs.ga@coleg.gov>

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB26-1013

Dear Chair and Members of the House Business Affairs & Labor Committee,

My name is Royla Rice. I rent an apartment on the southwest side of Colorado Springs. It is relevant to this bill to clarify that the apartment complex is owned and managed by a Foreign LLC located in Seattle, Washington and that this LLC began use of a utility billing system in the form of a third-party app in June 2024. I am here to testify in support of HB26-1013 concerning the use of ratio utility billing and use requirements proscribed on landlords based on my direct experience as a renter.

In February 2024, I was notified that new utilities would be assessed effective June 2024. I would receive a monthly invoice from Zego but the charges would be visible in AppFolio as well.

The utility provider is Colorado Springs Utilities, a fact I was only able to learn by asking my city council member; the Utility Board is composed solely of the members of City Council and a CEO appointed by them. That was as far as I could go to learn how billing should work or what a general amount might be given the lack of clarity from the LLCs notice. Utility regulations prevent CSU from disclosing any information about utilities provided or what an average bill might look like.

Colorado Springs Utilities refused to answer any questions concerning water, sewer, trash, and how they are billed to the property. I was told I was not a customer, the LLC is the customer. I have an electricity bill in my own name, it's my account, I am the customer. The new utilities assessed as of June 2024 include water, sewer, and garbage which are billed in aggregate to the LLC.

The LLC uses a third-party app called Zego to divide the aggregate bill based on a ratio and on individual use. It is not clear which utilities are assessed by which method.

I do not have access to Zego as a customer and cannot ask clarifying questions without an account. Zego does not provide a detailed accounting of the billing amounts, neither aggregate nor those specific to the amount assessed for my unit or individual use—Zego does not show its math. Zego sends a template-style paper bill showing only the final amount charged for sewer, garbage, water and an additional Admin Fee that was not disclosed by the LLC prior to adding it to the utility amount. The LLC uses a separate third-party app called AppFolio to manage monthly rent charges, maintenance, leases, personal property information, and insurance documents. Zego utility charges are added to the monthly rent bill in AppFolio.

The only way that I can see how the utilities are calculated and assessed is through asking the manager to let me come to the office and view it. That is unacceptable.

The provisions of HB1013 correct the deficiencies that I have experienced with a Foreign LLCs exploitative opportunistic use of a ratio utility billing system and unauthorized additional fees. I urge you to pass this bill as is to rectify these deficient practices.