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Sempra, PG&E lobbying jumps in 2025, amidst California legislative action on utility affordability

Lobbying included efforts to block policies that would save utility customers money

SACRAMENTO—California's four largest investor-owned utilities spent just under \$9.4 million on lobbying and influence efforts in 2025, including efforts to block legislation that would save customers billions—even as utility customers across the state face skyrocketing electricity bills.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), the state's largest utility, spent [over \\$4.7 million](#) lobbying California lawmakers and state agencies this year—a 34% increase from 2024, when it spent over \$3.5 million. Sempra (parent company to San Diego Gas & Electric and SoCalGas) increased its spending by 50% compared to last year, [spending over \\$2.4 million](#) in 2025 compared to over \$1.6 million in 2024. Southern California Edison (SCE) [spent \\$2.2 million](#) on lobbying and influence efforts in 2025, the same year that evidence suggests its equipment sparked the devastating Eaton fire.

"While California customers struggle with soaring utility bills, for-profit utilities are spending millions to block the very solutions that would help them. They're legally required to maximize shareholder profits, so they lobby against affordability measures, push for wasteful spending at the CPUC, and request higher profit rates—all while reporting record or near-record profits," said **Nicole Capretz, Founder and CEO, Climate Action Campaign**.

Utilities Spend Big to Block Accountability and Ratepayer Protections

PG&E, SCE, and Sempra lobbied against [AB 1167 \(Berman\)](#) and [SB 24 \(McNerney\)](#)—legislation designed to constrain utility political spending. AB 1167, signed into law, prevents utilities from charging customers for lobbying and political activities. SB 24 would have specifically prohibited utilities from lobbying against municipal utility efforts and expanded the Public Advocates

Office's authority to investigate utility spending. SB 24 passed both chambers but was [vetoed due to a drafting error](#). According to a [2025 poll](#), 93% of California voters surveyed agree that utilities should not charge customers for wasteful spending, including lobbying, PR, and marketing campaigns.

"Utilities spent on lobbying to block legislation that would stop them from charging customers for that very lobbying. It's a perfect example of how the current system works against ratepayers—utilities use customer dollars to fight customer protections, then charge customers for that fight. We are grateful the consumer protections in AB 1167 passed despite utility opposition to prevent abuse of ratepayer dollars in the future," said **Ayn Craciun, policy director at Climate Action Campaign**.

Throughout the 2025 session, PG&E, SCE, and Sempra lobbied against public financing of transmission included in AB 825 (Petrie-Norris), and ultimately passed in SB 254 (Becker). Public financing reduces ratepayer costs by up to [50 percent](#), or \$3 billion per year—the largest utility bill savings available. Utilities opposed it because it would eliminate the expensive utility-financed projects from which shareholders profit.

Utilities ultimately supported SB 254 after the bill included provisions to replenish California's wildfire fund—a state-backed insurance program protecting utilities from wildfire liability. In the end, utilities accepted modest customer savings on transmission in exchange for greater protection of their own balance sheets. [91% of California voters support](#) ending excessive utility profits to cut consumer costs.

Utilities Report Significant Lobbying at the CPUC

Beyond legislative battles, PG&E, SCE, and Sempra all reported significant lobbying at the California Public Utilities Commission as utilities pursued multiple rate increases. PG&E alone has 13 separate rate requests before the CPUC, with just [last week bringing approval](#) for an additional \$1.4 billion in spending for wildfire mitigation work.

"This fragmented approach to ratemaking obscures the true cumulative burden on customers. California lawmakers could improve transparency by requiring the commission to consolidate the majority of ratemaking into a single decision rather than a multitude of separate requests," said **Capretz**.

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