# California Assembly Committee Halts Controversial Monthly Electric Charge Bill AB 1999



On May 16, 2024, the California Assembly Appropriations Committee decided to halt AB 1999, a bill aimed at prompting a legislative review of a controversial new monthly fixed electric charge approved by the Newsom administration. This $24.15 monthly fee, implemented by the California Public Utilities Commission, was designed to lower the kilowatt-hour rate but has faced backlash for potentially increasing costs for millions of low-usage households.

The committee, primarily composed of committee members who did not vote, including two Democrats who supported the bill, provided no explanation for their decision. The charge has been criticized by a coalition of over 250 consumer groups, arguing that it unfairly shifts costs onto residents in smaller homes and those using solar power.

Moreover, the financial strain of California's budget deficit influenced lawmakers to refrain from advancing numerous other bills, such as those concerning psychedelic therapy and workers' rights to disconnect from work outside of hours. The committee's decisions reflect the state's need to balance fiscal responsibility with legislative progress amidst economic challenges.