



# NEWS RELEASE

**Arizona House of Representatives**  
**Representative Teresa Martinez (R-16)**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Hobbs Veto Leaves Rural Ratepayers Defenseless Against Extreme Utility Rate Hikes

*Governor Hobbs sided with her bureaucracy and utilities over Arizona families, putting population and politics ahead of financial harm*

**STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX** – Governor Katie Hobbs has vetoed [House Bill 2113](#), legislation that would have required the Residential Utility Consumer Office (RUCO) to intervene when a utility proposes raising residential rates by 100 percent or more.

State Representative Teresa Martinez, Chairman of the House Rural Economic Development Committee, introduced the bill after Pinal County residents facing a proposed rate increase of more than 200 percent asked RUCO for help and were turned away because their community was considered too small. Without RUCO's help, the residents were forced to hire and pay for their own attorney, even though the agency was created to represent residential ratepayers.

Representative Martinez and her Legislative District 16 colleagues [pressed RUCO for answers last year](#) about its refusal to help the residents and its handling of their requests. After [RUCO suggested the utility's proposed increase could be justified](#) before conducting a thorough review of the request, Martinez introduced HB 2113 to ensure families facing the most extreme rate hikes would receive representation from the state's ratepayer advocate.

RUCO was created to represent residential utility customers so they would not have to hire their own attorneys. Its director is appointed by the Governor and can choose which rate cases the agency takes on. RUCO currently [gives greater weight to the number of customers affected than to the financial harm imposed](#) on each household, leaving smaller communities without representation even when residents face the largest increases.

**“What Governor Hobbs has done is wrong,”** said Representative Martinez. **“Arizona families could see their monthly water bills double or triple, and the Governor’s ratepayer office can refuse to represent them because their community is considered too small. The size of a town should not decide whether its families deserve help. Governor Hobbs had a chance to protect rural ratepayers, and she chose to protect her bureaucracy and the utilities instead.”**

*Teresa Martinez is a Republican member of the Arizona House of Representatives serving Legislative District 16, which includes portions of Pinal and Pima Counties. She also serves as Chairman of the House Rural Economic Development Committee. Follow her on X at @TMartinez4AZ.*

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