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**From:** PUC

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2015 8:52 AM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** BHP Rate Case, EL14-026

Ms. Campbell:

Thank you for your comment. It will be added to the Black Hills Power rate case docket, <http://www.puc.sd.gov/Dockets/Electric/2014/EL14-026.aspx>, along with this response. Because commissioners have a decision-making role in docket matters, any discussion with a commissioner about an open docket must take place in an open, public forum. By placing your comments in the docket file, other commissioners and interested parties will have access to your comments for consideration.

When a utility files a rate case with the commission, the commission is obligated by law to thoroughly process the case. We cannot simply reject it since we are required to investigate it and make a just and reasonable decision. This process typically takes about a year. Each commissioner, the commission's staff and expert consultants hired by staff will review the entire case (also referred to as a docket) separately, along with any intervenors in the case. We request and review additional information from the utility before a decision is reached.

You mention more salaries and bonuses for BHP executives, owners and investors. BHP is one entity owned by Black Hills Corporation's shareholders, along with several other entities. Since BHP is a public utility, federal and state laws govern how it must operate and how the commission must regulate it – which is distinctly different than for most other businesses. However, the commission does not regulate BHC. The laws include what is commonly known as "ring-fencing" and this prevents an investor-owned utility of being stripped of its profits by shareholders. The intent is to retain sufficient funds to operate the utility and reinvest in the system in order to provide safe, reliable service to the utility's customers.

The cost of electricity is on the for you and me, and for other investor-owned, rural cooperative and municipal electric systems' customers throughout South Dakota and the U.S. South Dakota has six investor-owned electric utilities, and of these, four have open rate case request dockets before the commission. The most-often cited reason for these increased rates by the utilities filing them is new federal mandates, particularly those from the Environmental Protection Agency. American Electric Power reports that 65,000 MW of electric capacity are being retired largely because of EPA regulations. That is nearly 30 times the amount of electricity the state of South Dakota uses at peak demand. EPA mandates were one of the four reasons cited by BHP in filing this rate

increase request. You can read BHP official Vance Crocker's testimony about this in the docket, EL14-026, at <http://www.puc.sd.gov/commission/dockets/electric/2014/EL14-026/crocker.pdf>

Here is a document which explains the processing of electric utility rate case requests which may be helpful to you. It references the South Dakota Codified Laws governing utilities and the commission regarding electric rate requests: <http://www.puc.sd.gov/commission/Publication/electricratecasehandout.pdf>

You also mention your frustration with your WOW internet/cable provider. The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission does not regulate information services (internet or cable). The FCC oversees information services, and here is a link for you to file a complaint with the FCC: <http://www.fcc.gov/complaints>

Chris Nelson, Chairman  
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
[www.puc.sd.gov](http://www.puc.sd.gov)

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**From:** Sue McCormick [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2015 12:13:21 AM  
**To:** PUC  
**Subject:** Rate Increases  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

Please stop the rate increase from Black Hills Power – I can't afford anymore – they have raised my rates 5 times in nine years, I'm hurting back here – I didn't get that many pay raises in the time. I'm a widow, work 2 jobs (about 60 hours a week) and I still am having problems making ends meet and they are not helping me with all their increases. They need to find a different fuel source that doesn't require my bill going up constantly – I pay \$225 every month and still owe them more in August – it's insane – I live alone and I'm not home very much! I would prefer to have clean, local energy production, and a long-term policy that helps South Dakota become more energy independent vs. the costly fossil fuel that are increasing every year. Please help the consumers out and help us get more affordable rates so we don't have to lose our houses and roofs over our heads.

Thank you so very much,

Susan McCormick  
[REDACTED]

003812

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**From:** Sue McCormick [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2015 12:13:21 AM  
**To:** PUC  
**Subject:** Rate Increases  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

Please stop the rate increase from Black Hills Power – I can't afford anymore – they have raised my rates 5 times in nine years, I'm hurting back here – I didn't get that many pay raises in the time. I'm a widow, work 2 jobs (about 60 hours a week) and I still am having problems making ends meet and they are not helping me with all their increases. They need to find a different fuel source that doesn't require my bill going up constantly – I pay \$225 every month and still owe them more in August – it's insane – I live alone and I'm not home very much! I would prefer to have clean, local energy production, and a long-term policy that helps South Dakota become more energy independent vs. the costly fossil fuel that are increasing every year. Please help the consumers out and help us get more affordable rates so we don't have to lose our houses and roofs over our heads.

Thank you so very much,

Susan McCormick  
[REDACTED]

003813

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**From:** Salcone [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 26, 2015 9:09:26 PM  
**To:** PUC  
**Subject:** rate increases  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

It's time for South Dakota and Black Hills Power to join the 21st century. Now that we **know** that coal burning plants contribute to climate change, we (you) need to make changes. If our rates are to be increased, it should be for a progressive reason, not to continue with technology that adds to the destruction of our environment. I am opposed to this rate increase for that reason.

Molly Salcone  
[REDACTED]

003814

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**From:** PUC

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2015 9:38 AM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** BHP RATE CASE, EL14-026

Ms. Salcone:

Thank you for your comment. It will be added to the Black Hills Power rate case docket, <http://www.puc.sd.gov/Dockets/Electric/2014/EL14-026.aspx>, along with this response. Because commissioners have a decision-making role in docket matters, any discussion with a commissioner about an open docket must take place in an open, public forum. By placing your comments in the docket file, other commissioners and interested parties will have access to your comments for consideration.

Here is a document which explains the processing of electric utility rate case requests which may be helpful to you. It references the South Dakota Codified Laws governing utilities and the commission regarding electric rate requests: <http://www.puc.sd.gov/commission/Publication/electricratecasehandout.pdf>

Chris Nelson, Chairman  
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
[www.puc.sd.gov](http://www.puc.sd.gov)

003815

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**From:** Mike Cales [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2015 11:07:34 AM  
**To:** PUC  
**Subject:** Clean, Local Energy  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

As a South Dakota resident of Rapid City, I would like to see our state do anything possible to reduce the use of pollution-causing fuels. I would also like to see the cost of our power drop in price if possible. Using wind and the sun to generate our electricity seems like a much smarter alternative going into the future. We all know how much wind we get in our area....why not take advantage of it, while doing something responsible for our planet at the same time.

Sincerely, Mike Cales

003816

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**From:** PUC

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2015 11:54 AM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** BHP Rate Case, EL14-026

Mr. Cales:

Thank you for your comment. It will be added to the Black Hills Power rate case docket, <http://www.puc.sd.gov/Dockets/Electric/2014/EL14-026.aspx>, along with this response. Because commissioners have a decision-making role in docket matters, any discussion with a commissioner about an open docket must take place in an open, public forum. By placing your comments in the docket file, other commissioners and interested parties will have access to your comments for consideration.

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Chris Nelson, Chairman  
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
[www.puc.sd.gov](http://www.puc.sd.gov)

003817

-----Original Message-----

From: Dennis Champ [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, January 19, 2015 12:04 PM

To: Fiegen, Kristie

Subject: Reject the Black Hills Power rate request

Commissioner

Chair Hanson and Commissioners Nelson and Fiegen:

I strongly oppose the rate increase by Black Hills Power, and I urge you to deny their request. It is not in the public interest and it is not good for South Dakota. Black Hills Power tried to use this rate increase to make it harder for us to invest in our own electricity generation; it seems they are not making choices in the best interest of South Dakotans.

Black Hills Power should be investing in local energy and creating a more stable future for South Dakota's citizens and rate payers. The company knew coal was going to get more expensive, and now they're risking our future by investing in natural gas, another fossil fuel subject to price increases and further regulation.

Please deny Black Hills Power's rate increase request.

Dennis Champ  
[REDACTED]

003818

[REDACTED]  
Sent: Monday, January 19, 2015 12:04 PM

To: Nelson, Chris

Subject: Reject the Black Hills Power rate request

Commissioner

Chair Hanson and Commissioners Nelson and Fiegen:

I strongly oppose the rate increase by Black Hills Power, and I urge you to deny their request. It is not in the public interest and it is not good for South Dakota. Black Hills Power tried to use this rate increase to make it harder for us to invest in our own electricity generation; it seems they are not making choices in the best interest of South Dakotans.

Black Hills Power should be investing in local energy and creating a more stable future for South Dakota's citizens and rate payers. The company knew coal was going to get more expensive, and now they're risking our future by investing in natural gas, another fossil fuel subject to price increases and further regulation.

Please deny Black Hills Power's rate increase request.

Dennis Champ  
[REDACTED]

003819

-----Original Message-----

From: Dennis Champ [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, January 19, 2015 12:04 PM

To: Hanson, Gary (PUC)

Subject: Reject the Black Hills Power rate request

Chair

Chair Hanson and Commissioners Nelson and Fiegen:

I strongly oppose the rate increase by Black Hills Power, and I urge you to deny their request. It is not in the public interest and it is not good for South Dakota. Black Hills Power tried to use this rate increase to make it harder for us to invest in our own electricity generation; it seems they are not making choices in the best interest of South Dakotans.

Black Hills Power should be investing in local energy and creating a more stable future for South Dakota's citizens and rate payers. The company knew coal was going to get more expensive, and now they're risking our future by investing in natural gas, another fossil fuel subject to price increases and further regulation.

Please deny Black Hills Power's rate increase request.

Dennis Champ  
[REDACTED]

003820

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**From:** PUC

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 20, 2015 4:50 PM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** BHP Rate Case, EL14-026

Mr. Champ:

Thank you for your comment. It will be added to the Black Hills Power rate case docket, <http://www.puc.sd.gov/Dockets/Electric/2014/EL14-026.aspx>, along with my response for the other commissioners and those interested to read regarding this open docket before the commission. Because commissioners have a decision-making role in docket matters, any discussion with a commissioner about an open docket must take place in an open, public forum.

Here is a document which explains the processing of electric utility rate case requests which may be helpful to you. It references the South Dakota Codified Laws governing utilities and the commission regarding electric rate requests: <http://www.puc.sd.gov/commission/Publication/electricratecasehandout.pdf>

Gary Hanson, Chairperson  
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
[www.puc.sd.gov](http://www.puc.sd.gov)

003821



Chris Nelson, Chairperson  
Kristie Fiegen, Vice Chairperson  
Gary Hanson, Commissioner

*South Dakota*

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

500 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-5070  
[www.puc.sd.gov](http://www.puc.sd.gov)

Capitol Office  
(605) 773-3201

Grain Warehouse  
(605) 773-5280

Consumer Hotline  
1-800-332-1782

Email  
[puc@state.sd.us](mailto:puc@state.sd.us)

January 27, 2015

Darwin Hoeft

Dear Mr. Hoeft:

This is in response to your letter regarding the Black Hills Power rate case increase request application currently being reviewed by the commission.

The BHP rates which went into effect Oct. 1, 2014 are interim rates. As noted in BHP's application, the utility requested an average increase of 9.25 percent. The increased rate request varies somewhat between customer classes, however, the percentage change between classes is not vastly different.

One item that can be confusing for consumers in their bills is the Cost Adjustment Summary. This is the billing question most frequently asked. These charges consist of: 1) Environmental Improvement Adjustment (EIA), 2) Energy Efficiency Solutions Adjustment (EESA), 3) Transmission Cost Adjustment (TCA), 4) Fuel and Purchased Power Adjustment (FPPA), and 5) Transmission Facility Adjustment (TFA). All these charges are per kWh charges and require commission approval. An explanation of these charges with current rates can be found under Section 3C, pages 12 through 22 of BHP's tariff at the following link:

<http://puc.sd.gov/Tariffs/electrictariff.aspx>

Items such as plant construction and maintenance are included in base rates, which are composed of the Customer Charge and Energy Charge. BHP can only change these rates through a rate case request application.

By law, public utilities are allowed to implement their proposed increased rates once the required 180-day suspension ends. If the commission ultimately approves rates lower than the interim rates, BHP will refund its customers the difference in rates plus interest for the interim period.

If you are interested in learning about other possible energy-saving tools, I encourage you to check out such resources from BHP at [www.BHPsavemoney.com](http://www.BHPsavemoney.com) or by contacting BHP's Melanie Toney at (605) 721-1709. You may be a candidate for the utility's onsite assessment and whole home energy audit, seeking cost effective energy savings for your home.

When a utility files a rate case, the commission is obligated by law to thoroughly process the case. This process can take almost a year to complete. Each commissioner, the commission's staff and expert consultants hired by staff will review the entire case – referred to as a docket – separately, along with any intervenors in the case. We request and review additional data and information from the utility before a decision is rendered.

003822

The cost of electricity is on the rise not only for you and me, but for other investor-owned, rural cooperative and municipal electric systems' customers throughout South Dakota and the U.S. as we are learning in news reports daily. South Dakota has six investor-owned electric utilities, and of these, four currently have open rate case request dockets before the commission. The most-cited reason for these increased rates is new federal mandates, particularly those from the Environmental Protection Agency. American Electric Power reports that 65,000 MW of electric capacity are being retired largely because of EPA regulations. That is nearly 30 times the amount of electricity the state of South Dakota uses at peak demand. EPA mandates were one of the four reasons cited by BHP in filing this rate increase request. You can read BHP official Vance Crocker's testimony about this in the docket, EL14-026, at <http://www.puc.sd.gov/commission/dockets/electric/2014/EL14-026/crocker.pdf>

I appreciate your distaste for increased energy costs. None of us wishes to see our rates increase including my fellow commissioners and me. However, the law requires the commission to allow utility rates that are proven reasonable and justifiable. As a commissioner, I can assure you that I am not interested in inequitable percentage increases across customer classes, and I am certain my fellow commissioners would agree.

Enclosed is a document which helps explain the commission's process in handling rate cases such as this.

Thank you for contacting the commission with your concerns. All discussion involving commissioners on the case must be available to the public. Therefore, your comments and my response will be filed in the docket.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chris Nelson".

Chris Nelson

# Electric Rate Increase Requests

# South Dakota Public Utilities Commission

This guide is intended to offer a simple overview of the Public Utilities Commission's process in considering a rate increase request from an electric service provider within its jurisdiction. This guide is informational and does not discuss all situations, variations and exceptions of the rate case process and proceedings of the PUC. See South Dakota Codified Law 49-34A for additional information, on the Internet at [legis.sd.gov/statutes/Codified\\_Laws/QuickFind.aspx](http://legis.sd.gov/statutes/Codified_Laws/QuickFind.aspx); enter 49-34A to view the chapter.

## Electric Utilities in South Dakota

There are six investor-owned utility companies that provide electric service to specific geographic areas in South Dakota. These companies are owned by their investors and are managed as private enterprises. The PUC has regulatory authority, including ratemaking authority, over these investor-owned utilities: Black Hills Power, MidAmerican Energy Co., Montana-Dakota Utilities Co., NorthWestern Energy, Otter Tail Power Co. and Xcel Energy.

The PUC does not have ratemaking authority over electric cooperatives or municipal electric organizations. Each electric co-op is governed by a board of directors, elected by its membership. Municipal electric organizations are managed by the local government entity. The leadership of each of these groups is responsible for setting rates paid by its electric customers.

## Rate Case Process

When an investor-owned electric utility wishes to modify its rates, it must seek permission from the PUC to do so. The company begins the process by filing an application with the PUC that states the proposed rate of increase for each of its customer classes – residential, commercial and industrial, for example – and the rationale for the requested increase. The PUC has six months to investigate and make a decision about a rate request before the utility may put interim rates into effect, subject to refund depending on the PUC's decision.

## PUC Authority

The South Dakota Legislature gave the PUC authority to ensure utility companies in South Dakota provide safe and reliable service at fair and reasonable rates. In considering a rate case, the commission weighs the public's need for adequate, efficient and reasonable service and the need for the utility to collect revenues to enable it to meet its total current cost of furnishing such service and the opportunity to earn a fair and reasonable

return. The commission determines these factors based on definitions, standards and references specified in South Dakota Codified Law. In rendering its decision, the commission may approve, deny or approve with modifications the proposed rate increase as the commission finds appropriate and legally within its jurisdiction. The decision of the commission can be appealed to the circuit court and, ultimately, to the South Dakota Supreme Court.

The commission strives to issue a reasoned decision and modifications, where appropriate, that uphold the law and discourage a potentially expensive and lengthy appeal process.

## PUC Staff Role

Members of the PUC staff assigned to work on a rate case typically include one attorney and several analysts. Staff attorneys have educational and practical experience in administrative law, business management principles and trial procedure. Staff analysts have expertise in accounting, economics, research and engineering. The staff conducts a comprehensive analysis of the company's request and gathers additional information from the company, intervenors and outside experts as necessary. Company operating expenses, employee benefits, executive compensation, corporate advertising, and the cost of generation and transmission facilities are among the many facets of the rate case the staff examines. In addition to reviewing the data and evidence submitted by the applicant and intervenors, PUC staff request and analyze opinions from experts and question the parties. The staff considers the information relative to state laws and rules and presents recommendations to the Public Utilities Commissioners.

**See page 2 for information about public involvement.**

## Public Involvement

South Dakotans with an interest in a rate case have a variety of ways to stay informed and involved.

- **Review the electronic docket.** A docket is the continually updated collection of documents filed with the commission for a particular case. Dockets are accessible under the Commission Actions tab on the PUC Web site, [www.puc.sd.gov](http://www.puc.sd.gov). Dockets are labeled to correspond with their type and filing date. For example, Black Hills Power's rate case docket is EL14-026; EL for electric, 14 for 2014 and 026 to indicate it was the 26<sup>th</sup> electric docket filed with the commission in 2014. Xcel Energy's rate case docket is EL14-058. MidAmerican Energy's is EL14-072. NorthWestern Energy's is EL14-106.
- **Submit comments.** Members of the public are encouraged to relay written comments or questions about a rate case to the PUC. These informal public comments are filed in the docket and reviewed and considered by the PUC commissioners and staff. Public comments must include the commenter's full name and address and should include the docket number or name of the company proposing the rate increase as well as the commenter's e-mail address and phone number, if available. These comments should be sent to [puc@state.sd.us](mailto:puc@state.sd.us) or PUC, 500 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501.
- **Become an intervenor.** Individuals who wish to be formal parties in a rate case may apply to the commission for intervenor status. Intervention deadline is clearly indicated within the docket. Intervention is appropriate for people who intend to actively participate in the case through legal motions, discovery (requests for facts or documents), the written preparation and presentation of actual evidence, and in-person participation in a formal hearing. Intervenors are legally obligated to respond to discovery from other parties and to submit to cross-examination at a formal hearing. Individuals seeking only to follow the progress of a rate case or to offer comments for the PUC's consideration need not become intervenors.

### South Dakota Public Utilities Commission

500 E. Capitol Ave.

Pierre, SD 57501

Toll-free Phone: 1-800-332-1782

Local Phone: (605) 773-3201

[www.puc.sd.gov](http://www.puc.sd.gov)

E-mail: [puc@state.sd.us](mailto:puc@state.sd.us)



Chris Nelson, Chairperson  
Kristie Fiegen, Vice Chairperson  
Gary Hanson, Commissioner

*South Dakota*

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

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Email  
[puc@state.sd.us](mailto:puc@state.sd.us)

January 27, 2015

Mike and Debra Parmley  
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Parmley:

This is in response to your letter in today's mail regarding the Black Hills Power rate case increase request application currently being reviewed by the commission.

It is important to remember that the BHP rates which went into effect on October 1, 2014 are interim rates. By law, public utilities are allowed to implement their proposed increased rates once the required 180-day suspension ends. If the commission ultimately approves rates lower than the interim rates, BHP will refund its customers the difference in rates plus interest for the interim period.

You relayed your last few months' BHP's bill totals. Since energy usage typically changes month-to-month, we cannot accurately compare one month's bill against the next and arrive at an increase amount or percentage without factoring in the energy usage component.

You pointed out the Cost Adjustment Charge. The Cost Adjustment Summary charges consist of: 1) Environmental Improvement Adjustment (EIA), 2) Energy Efficiency Solutions Adjustment (EESA), 3) Transmission Cost Adjustment (TCA), 4) Fuel and Purchased Power Adjustment (FPPA), and 5) Transmission Facility Adjustment (TFA). All these charges are per kWh charges and require commission approval. An explanation of these charges with current rates can be found under Section 3C, pages 12 through 22 of BHP's tariff at the following link: <http://puc.sd.gov/Tariffs/electrictariff.aspx>

You mentioned the purchase of a new furnace last spring which is more energy efficient than the original furnace and that should reduce your winter heating energy needs. If you are interested in learning about other possible energy-saving tools, I encourage you to contact BHP's Melanie Toney at (605) 721-1709. You may be a candidate for the utility's onsite assessment and whole home energy audit, seeking the most cost effective energy savings for your home.

When a utility files a rate case with the commission, the commission is obligated by law to thoroughly process the case. We cannot simply say no and reject it since we are required to investigate it and make a just and reasonable decision. This process can take almost a year to complete. Each commissioner, the commission's staff and expert consultants hired by staff will review the entire case – referred to as a docket – separately, along with any intervenors in the case. We request and review additional data and information from the utility before a decision is rendered.

003826

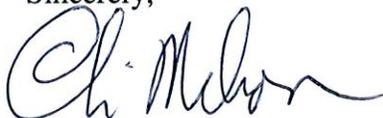
You mention your frustration with the financial gain by the owners of BHP. BHP is one entity owned by Black Hills Corporation's shareholders, along with several other entities. Since BHP is a public utility, federal and state laws govern how it must operate and how the commission must regulate it. However, the commission does not regulate BHC. The laws include what is commonly known as "ring-fencing" and this prevents an investor-owned utility of being stripped of its profits by shareholders. The purpose is to retain sufficient funds to operate the utility and reinvest in the system in order to provide safe, reliable service to the utility's customers.

The cost of electricity is on the rise not only for you and me, but for other investor-owned, rural cooperative and municipal electric systems' customers throughout South Dakota and the U.S. as we are learning in news reports daily. South Dakota has six investor-owned electric utilities, and of these, four currently have open rate case request dockets before the commission. The most-cited reason for these increased rates is new federal mandates, particularly those from the Environmental Protection Agency. American Electric Power reports that 65,000 MW of electric capacity are being retired largely because of EPA regulations. That is nearly 30 times the amount of electricity the state of South Dakota uses at peak demand. EPA mandates were one of the four reasons cited by BHP in filing this rate increase request. You can read BHP official Vance Crocker's testimony about this in the docket, EL14-026, at <http://www.puc.sd.gov/commission/dockets/electric/2014/EL14-026/crocker.pdf>

I appreciate your distaste for increased energy costs. None of us wishes to see our rates increase including my fellow commissioners and me. However, the law requires the commission to allow utility rates that are proven reasonable and justifiable.

Thank you for contacting the commission with your concerns. All discussion involving commissioners on the case must be available to the public. Therefore, your comments and my response will be filed in the docket.

Sincerely,



Chris Nelson

-----Original Message-----

From: Nancy Ward [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, January 27, 2015 4:07 PM

To: Fiegen, Kristie

Subject: Reject the Black Hills Power rate request

Commissioner

Chair Hanson and Commissioners Nelson and Fiegen:

I strongly oppose the rate increase by Black Hills Power, and I urge you to deny their request. It is not in the public interest and it is not good for South Dakota. Black Hills Power tried to use this rate increase to make it harder for us to invest in our own electricity generation; it seems they are not making choices in the best interest of South Dakotans.

Black Hills Power should be investing in local energy and creating a more stable future for South Dakota's citizens and rate payers. The company knew coal was going to get more expensive, and now they're risking our future by investing in natural gas, another fossil fuel subject to price increases and further regulation.

Please deny Black Hills Power's rate increase request.

Nancy Ward  
[REDACTED]

003828

-----Original Message-----

From: Nancy Ward

To: Gary Hanson

ReplyTo: Ward, Nancy

Subject: Reject the Black Hills Power rate request

Sent: Jan 27, 2015 4:07 PM

Chair

Chair Hanson and Commissioners Nelson and Fiegen:

I strongly oppose the rate increase by Black Hills Power, and I urge you to deny their request. It is not in the public interest and it is not good for South Dakota. Black Hills Power tried to use this rate increase to make it harder for us to invest in our own electricity generation; it seems they are not making choices in the best interest of South Dakotans.

Black Hills Power should be investing in local energy and creating a more stable future for South Dakota's citizens and rate payers. The company knew coal was going to get more expensive, and now they're risking our future by investing in natural gas, another fossil fuel subject to price increases and further regulation.

Please deny Black Hills Power's rate increase request.

Nancy Ward



003829

## Lashley, Joy (PUC)

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**From:** Van Gerpen, Patty  
**Sent:** Friday, January 30, 2015 11:02 AM  
**To:** Lashley, Joy (PUC)  
**Subject:** FW: BHP Rate Case, EL14-026

Please post in the BHP Rate Case docket, EL14-026, under Comments and Responses.

-Patty

---

**From:** PUC  
**Sent:** Friday, January 30, 2015 11:01 AM  
**To:** 'nward6@gmail.com'  
**Subject:** BHP Rate Case, EL14-026

Ms. Ward:

Thank you for your comment. It will be added to the Black Hills Power rate case docket, <http://www.puc.sd.gov/Dockets/Electric/2014/EL14-026.aspx>, along with this response. Because commissioners have a decision-making role in docket matters, any discussion with a commissioner about an open docket must take place in an open, public forum. By placing your comments in the docket file, other commissioners and interested parties will have access to your comments for consideration.

Here is a document which explains the processing of electric utility rate case requests which may be helpful to you. It references the South Dakota Codified Laws governing utilities and the commission regarding electric rate requests: <http://www.puc.sd.gov/commission/Publication/electricratecasehandout.pdf>

Chris Nelson, Chairman  
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
[www.puc.sd.gov](http://www.puc.sd.gov)

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From: Michele Kohn [REDACTED]  
Sent: Tuesday, January 27, 2015 4:36:17 PM  
To: PUC  
Subject: BH Power Increase  
Auto forwarded by a Rule

Please, Sirs or Madams....

Give strong consideration to denial of Black Hills Power asking for another rate increase.....6th in 9 years!!

PLEASE work to increase and improve South Dakota's use of renewables like wind and solar. We surely have plenty of both. We are behind other states who use renewables. Let's show what our engineers are capable of. In this way, maybe South Dakota can finally improve salaries paid to people working on these projects bringing more dollars to all communities therefore improving Main Streets and education dollars in the long run.

Look beyond fossil fuels.

Thank you

Michele Kohn  
Rapid City

Sent from my iPad

003831