



**MCEDA**

**Minnehaha County Economic Development Association**

*in cooperation with the*

**Sioux Falls Development Foundation**

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November 16, 2009

**RECEIVED**

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Patricia Van Gerpen, Executive Director  
Public Utilities Commission  
Capitol Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
500 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

**SOUTH DAKOTA  
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Dear Ms. Van Gerpen:

I am writing in support of Xcel Energy's pending rate case that is currently before the PUC, docket # EL09-009. In particular I wish to let the Commission know of the significant role Xcel plays in the growth of South Dakota by their support of economic and community development.

I have been involved in economic development in southeastern South Dakota for over 13 years and throughout that time, in communities both large and small, Xcel has always been counted on to take a leadership role in local initiatives. In addition to financial assistance, their South Dakota staff serves on numerous boards and volunteer groups. This level of support and involvement helps grow the state's economy which in turn benefits all of us through a stable and expanding tax and customer base.

As long term supporters of economic development, Xcel understands that the answer to the current economic slowdown is to plan for and invest in the future. Through improved infrastructure and a strong economic development agenda, the support and vision of Xcel is more important than ever.

As your staff and the Commissioners consider this rate case, I understand you must look at the dollars and cents and their relation to service delivery. Additionally I would urge you to include Xcel's economic development work within the case as the growth of the area is an important ingredient to our continued success and the long term stability of our utility rates.

Thank you for your consideration, please do not hesitate to let me know if I can answer any questions or provide additional testimony.

Sincerely,

Jeff Eckhoff, Executive Director  
Lincoln & Minnehaha County Economic Development Associations

**Representing Economic Development In:**

Baltic \* Brandon \* Colton \* Crooks \* Dell Rapids \* Garretson \* Hartford \* Humboldt \* Sherman \* Valley Springs