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**From:** Joe Jance  
**Sent:** Monday, November 09, 2009 8:12:11 PM  
**To:** PUC  
**Subject:** BHP Rate Increase  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

To whom it may concern,

I write you in protest of the proposed 26% rate increase requested by Black Hills Power. Like many others that have filed protests about this rate hike, I find the requested hike beyond all credibility. I would like to highlight just a few points that should alone be enough to deny any rate increase.

First, I would like to highlight to the PUC the obvious. The economy is horrible. Many of our fellow citizens in Western South Dakota are currently unemployed or underemployed. Business owners are struggling to make ends meet and keep employees on their payrolls. As a local business it is time for BHP to also tighten its belt.

Second, I would point out that a 26% increase would be an extraordinary rate increase in the best of economic times. In the current economic environment a 2.6% increase would be too much! BHP does not seem to be in touch with the economic climate, nor with the people with which they claim to be neighbors.

Last, but most importantly, I would point out that a responsible business plans ahead. Responsible business managers don't start building a new power plant without contingency plans. Where was the risk analysis? What steps did BHP take to mitigate any economic risks? Surely the plan wasn't to simply charge more if needed? It would seem that this is exactly what BHP is telling the people of Western South Dakota with their request. If a local grocery store raised its rates by 26.6% they would quickly lose business. I see no reason to allow BHP to conduct business in a way that would not be rewarded in a free market.

I would implore the members of the PUC to deny any rate increase whatsoever. Even a small rate increase in this economy will be against the public good. Frankly, I think any rate increase would be a slap in the face of your neighbors.

Best regards,  
Joe Jance  
Rapid City, SD