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**From:** Richard Opp  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 25, 2009 11:19:11 AM  
**To:** PUC  
**Subject:** Black Hills Power Rate Hike  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

Good Morning,

I was unable to attend last evening's public hearing at the Journey Museum. I would like to express my strong opposition to the requested 26.6% rate increase by Black Hills Power. My opposition is both from a business and consumer standpoint.

From a business standpoint, budgets have been formulated and prices have been set for the coming fiscal year. Utilities are not a major expense to our company but they are a sizeable portion of our total expenses. For Black Hills Power to present it's customers with a 26.6% rate increase is beyond "fair and reasonable". How can any business possibly plan for something like this? How can they possibly justify such an increase? This matter isn't going to be heard again until February 2010 with a decision to be made in March 2010. By that time we're one quarter into the new year. Adjustments can't be made to handle such an increase.

As a homeowner I don't see how my budget will simply absorb this. My last pay increase was in June 2008 and that brought me to a level of pay I should have been at when I was hired in 2005. From a personal standpoint, utilities are a major portion of my budget. I question the ability of people in a much lower income bracket than mine as being able to handle such an increase.

The state has "touched" on the area of "wind energy". Other states seem to be very aggressive in this area but SD plays a "hot and cold" game.

I couldn't agree less with Mr. Derby's assessment as BHP being "a good civic neighbor". If Mr. Derby was in attendance, no doubt there was an agenda of some sort on his own behalf. Rapid City's major industry for many years has been tourism. The city's only major industry was recently lost with not much hope of replacement. I don't see any indication of "growth and development" in this area.

I returned to SD ten years ago after having lived in Colorado for twenty seven years. I think it's time to consider returning to Colorado.

Richard Opp