

Dear Mr. Christensen,

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. We will add them to the public commentary for consideration in this docket.

Sincerely,

Chris Nelson  
SD Public Utilities Commissioner  
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[puc.sd.gov](http://puc.sd.gov)

**Sent:** Thursday, July 28, 2011 4:10 PM  
**To:** Nelson, Chris  
**Subject:** FW: Xcel Energy proposed rate hike

Dear Mr. Nelson,

I recently took part in a seminar on reducing consumer utility costs sponsored by AARP here in Sioux Falls. One of the topics of discussion was a proposed rate hike by Excel Energy to the tune of 9.28 percent to be effective Aug. 1, 2011 and the fact that this rate increase would need approval from the Public Utilities Commission. My wife and I are both retired, living here in Sioux Falls on Social Security and a small monthly withdrawal from our own Individual Retirement Account. Neither of us is eligible for a pension from either of our former occupations so what we have for retirement is what we were able to put away on our own. Needless to say, there is not much disposal income left at the end of any month. With all of the rate and price increases that everyone is imposing (groceries to the gas pump to everything you need to live on) including Sioux Falls water rates going up another double digit (which I realize you have no control over) I see this proposed rate increase exorbitant. I do find it ironic that the last apparent rate increase that Excel Energy received was in 2009 which, if I remember correctly, was also the last increase we got in our Social Security checks. That also was about the time anyone in the work force received any kind of a pay increase that you could actually see in a paycheck. Given the dysfunction in Washington, DC right now, it doesn't appear things are going to get better for any of us, particularly senior citizens, any time soon. I would like to urge you to not let this rate increase happen. When we, as seniors, must spend all of our available income on the absolute basics of life, the economy has very little chance of ever making a decent recovery.

Sincerely,

Darrel R. Christensen