



Chris Nelson, Chair
Kristie Fiegen, Vice Chair
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**SOUTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

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April 9, 2012

Ms. Patricia Van Gerpen
Executive Director
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

**RE: In the Matter of the Application of Northern States Power Company dba Xcel
Energy for Authority to Increase its Electric Rates
Docket EL11-019**

Dear Ms. Van Gerpen:

Northern States Power Company dba Xcel Energy (Xcel) submitted its application to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for authority to increase its electric rates in South Dakota on June 30, 2011. The Commission issued its Order for and Notice of Procedural Schedule and Notice of Hearing (Order) in this matter on February 28, 2012.

Pursuant to discussions with Xcel, the parties propose to suspend the procedural schedule set forth in the Commission's Order to allow for settlement discussions to proceed without simultaneously having to contend with testimony deadlines. Staff testimony will now be filed on April 16, 2012.

Staff has discussed this proposal with Xcel and it is our understanding that Xcel supports our requested suspension. Should you have any questions regarding our request, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Karen E. Cremer

Cc: Kari Valley