December 5, 2012

Dear Kristie,

I am writing regarding Xcel Energy and their intentions. It has come to my attention that they will be implementing a 10% rate increase commencing January 1, 2013. I do not understand why this should be permissible in the current condition of our economy. Most companies including mine have made cuts and other sacrifices, and have even implemented pay freezes for a substantially long time in order to maintain their customer stability, but why should Xcel Energy be able to make such a ridiculous change?

I feel Xcel Energy must decipher how to control their costs as opposed to raising their rates especially when they have such unsatisfactory productivity with their linemen. My business is located near Xcel Energy in Sioux Falls, and as I drive by several times a week, I witness their poor behavior. It is ethically wrong for men to stand around their trucks while one or two is actually working, not to mention how their hourly rates are off the charts compared to other smaller and local utility companies such as Southeastrn Electric, and Consolidated Utility Service. If the pay rates amongst these companies are compared, the disparity in wages is disturbing. It has also come to my attention that linemen have actually refused to get out of their trucks to perform their jobs due to rain with the backing of their labor union, yet they were still compensated their hourly wages and benefits for performing no tasks. (Please also consider the events that just recently occurred with Hostess and their labor union).

If other local businesses are to make cuts and remain on wage freezes, it is only ethical for Xcel Energy to do the same, or even consider a 10% *decrease* in their rates to maintain the stability of our fragile economy. I truly hope you will decline any and all requests from Xcel Energy regarding a rate increase. It is an outrageous notion that should not be implemented or even addressed.

Sincerely,

Dennis Aanenson