

Sent: Thursday, December 20, 2012 11:10:54 AM

To: PUC

Subject: Black Hills Power Rate Increase Request

Auto forwarded by a Rule

I have been unable to locate the BH Power docket for the most recent rate increase requested by that company, but I have been made aware of it through the Rapid City Journal. I was previously in opposition to the 2010 increase to pay for the Coal fired Gillette plant. Although the increase was reduced by the Commission, consumers were still saddled with nearly a 13% increase at that time. That plant was built and approved by the State of Wyoming without any input from the Consumers in SD. The rate increase was then requested by BH Power. That plant provides more than enough power to serve all SD customers, and supplemental power is being sold to North Dakota and Montana third party utilities. SD consumers had no

input with regard to the building of that plant, which was coal fired. No consideration was given to building a cleaner gas fired plant, even though BH Power knew regulations would require additional expenditures to come into compliance with EPA regulations. SD consumers were not only stuck with the already built coal fired non EPA compliant plant, but were saddled with a 13% increase to pay for it. It just so happens that BH Corporation also owns the Wyoming coal mines which sell the coal to the plant for fuel.

Now, BH Power is justifying the current rate increase through costs associate with building the new gas fired plant near Cheyenne Wyoming. This, they say replaced Ben French and other small plants in Wyoming. They argued that the Gillette plant would provide power in SD for future demand for many years to come. This argument also is controversial as residential and business consumers have initiated conservation efforts thereby lowering or minimizing increased consumer demand. I am tired of BH Power's "backdoor" rate increase requests when neither SD regulators nor consumers have any input into the nature of their investments. The Gillette plant was an ill-advised investment. However, notwithstanding the closure of Ben French or other older small plants, I do not see the need for additional power for SD consumers. Where is the demand? Whatever small increase in demand that may exist should easily be provided by the 2 year old Gillette plant.

As a small business owner and landlord, I am asking the South Dakota PUC to protect our interests in this matter. My tenants are college students and young lower income people who cannot afford these continuous rate increases in their power bills. Black Hills Power and Light and other utilities should be considering the needs and limitations of it's customers prior to making investments, not just the profitability of the company. If they are allowed to do whatever they want, and then have the right to come back and require their SD customers to pay for it, that is equivalent to taxation without representation. We have the PUC because the utility is a monopolized industry and we have no other free enterprise alternatives to pursue.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

William Tysdal