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**From:** Eileen Fleishacker [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2014 11:20 AM  
**To:** Nelson, Chris  
**Subject:** Black Hills Power Request for Rate Increase

January 16, 2014

Commissioner Chris Nelson

Public Utilities Commission

State of South Dakota

501 E. Capitol

Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Commissioner Nelson:

I am writing in protest to Black Hills Power's recent request for a hearing to raise rates for its customers. The rate increase request comes on the heels of a costly storm clean-up and the decision to demolish 3 plants, 1 in Rapid City and 2 in Wyoming.

Let me first address the storm clean-up. There are very few people in the Rapid City and Black Hills area who did not incur any storm damages in the October 4 snowstorm. Tree damage, food spoilage due to lack of electricity, loss of wages for those who were unable to get to work, and other expenses were a huge setback to the financial picture of thousands of citizens. Those who were physically incapable of doing the cleanup on their personal property had to hire it done; and outside companies poured into the area charging exorbitant prices for those services. People who suffered unexpected storm-related expenses need a chance to catch up financially. What they don't need is to increase the cost of living via a rate increase from a company whose profit margin is admirable and whose executives make salaries over 10 times that of the average wage earner in the Black Hills area.

Secondly, let me address the demolition of the Ben French plant and two plants in Wyoming. I can see no public benefit in this process. It is simply a cost of doing business and Black Hills Power IS a business. Some might even call it a

monopoly. If a small business incurs costs in demolishing or remodeling property, that business might raise prices to cover those costs. In that case, the customer has a choice of whether to continue doing business there or taking his or her business elsewhere. In the case of Black Hills Power, that choice is not there. If one lives in Rapid City and wants to have electricity, one must do business with Black Hills Power.

I am a Black Hills Corp stockholder. I realize that a rate increase will probably benefit my portfolio. However, I would not like to see that happen at the expense of the many hard-working, underpaid citizens of Rapid City. Please deny Black Hills Power's for a rate increase at this time.

Sincerely,

*Eileen Dixon Fleishacker*

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[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
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