

5-8-12  
S.D. Public Utilities Commission  
500 East Capitol Ave, 57501

RECEIVED  
MAY 09 2012  
SOUTH DAKOTA  
UTILITIES COMMISSION

Dear Sir,

I am writing this letter in response to an editorial in the Aberdeen American News dated Saturday, May 5, 2012. The Capitol Notebook writer, Bob Mercer heads up the editorial "Electricity extortion has S.D. roost."

After reading and reflecting about the Oak Tree project, I am less that enthusiastic about what green energy means to customers such as myself. I have been a life long citizen of South Dakota and have purchased my power needs from Northwestern for over 40 years and have always been impressed with this companies ability and resources to provide for our energy needs at a fair price. After reading this article I now realize what power companies are up against and that we the consumer are going to pay for the additional costs to guarantee The Oak Tree Project a return on their investment. I also know the costs of wind energy are expensive and unpredictable. I am not against alternative sources of energy, but I believe the power they produce must be competitive with the main sources of energy available. Consumers such as myself usually pay for all additional costs because they are simply passed on to us and we shut up, we move on and we pay the imposed price. As of late, I realize the toll this will have on many South Dakotans who are already faced with high gas prices, continued higher taxes, medical costs, insurance and inflation.

I am aware of the federal law "PURPA" that requires utility companies to buy from independent energy producers. This sounds like a law that needs to be overturned and it sounds unconstitutional to me. I would further add and I quote Bob Mercer from the American News, "This is like watching some gangster movie where people get offered a deal they won't be allowed to refuse, and a crooked police captain is watching from the door, except this is real."

I would strongly encourage the PUC to decline this company from doing business with S.D. and if needed, lets lobby our congressional delegation to change this law, which holds us hostage to any company who demands we buy their product. Perhaps the citizens of this State need to be fully aware through more information about this project/law so we can stand up for what is right and just. If we as citizens stand by quietly, we will continue to pay for new forms of energy like the recent bankrupt Solyendra Co. and now we get stuck with the tax bill! I believe the consumer can no longer stand by and hope for the best outcomes—we need strong leadership and we the people must become more vocal and proactive to help affect outcomes in favor of the consumer. Please take a positive stand on this issue and keep us informed.  
Thank you for allowing me to express my concern.

Luther Schumacher   
