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Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 10:30 PM
To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>
Subject: [EXT] Docket #EL21-011

April 28, 2021

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
500 E. Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501

To the Commissioners of the PUC;

I am writing to you today in regards to Black Hills Energy's request to amend its Cogeneration and Small Power Production Service tariff.

I believe that this is a severe violation of homeowners rights by a private company. If I choose to add solar panels or a wind turbine to our property, which we plan to do in the future, I should be able to store and utilize that power for my own convenience. A company should never be able to tell me what to do with what I have produced on my own property with equipment that I have purchased myself.

In a Rapid City Journal article posted today, Manager of Regulatory and Finance for Black Hills Energy, Jason Kiel had used the analogy of a car owner purchasing a bike in his testimony to the PUC. "He argued that car owners who choose to bike still have to pay for costs associated with owning a car, like car insurance, and the same is true for customers who cogenerate power." I believe that this analogy is far from accurate and is downright misleading. It would be more like having to pay the gas company for every mile you rode your bicycle. What Black Hills Energy proposes is more in line with the following analogies. Governor Noem's family raises cattle, and they want to butcher one to consume themselves. Walmart comes along and says, "No, you can't do that. You have to sell the beef to us for \$1 per pound. Then, you can buy it back for \$6 per pound from us." Ridiculous, right? One thing you will see in many back yards in the summer is a garden, tended lovingly by the property owner. They have a bumper crop of tomatoes and can't wait to eat them. Unfortunately Safeway has come along and said, "Nope, can't do that. You have to sell us all of your tomatoes for \$.25 each, and then you can buy them back from us for \$2 each." Gardeners would be livid!

I feel that these analogies better represent what Black Hills Energy is trying to do to homeowners. The homeowner invests time, money, and is trying to do the right thing for the environment, for their neighbors, and for his or herself and a private company tries to take away what they have worked hard for. This tariff does not align with South Dakota values and the rights of South Dakota citizens.

According to their 2019 annual report, Black Hills Energy had \$7.5 billion in assets, and their net profit was \$200 million dollars. Black Hills Energy will never go broke because a few homeowners have solar panels. Not every home or property is a good candidate for solar or wind energy, and there are even times when a homeowner with solar panels or a wind turbine will need to purchase electricity from Black Hills Energy.

Please, protect the homeowners from this egregious attack on personal freedom.

Thank you.

Melinda Cherry

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Black Hawk, SD 57718

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Sent from my iPhone