

**From:** Tara Haas [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 30, 2021 4:29 PM  
**To:** PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>  
**Subject:** [EXT] Docket EL21-011

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Dear Public Utilities Commissioner,

Regarding Docket EL21-011, my husband and I have a solar array at our home in Rapid City, and I would like to share a real world example of Black Hills Energy's current billing structure.

Looking at our April 2021 statement, we pulled 438 kWh from the grid and paid for those 438 kWh at BHE's standard rate. We sent 288 kWh to the grid from our solar system and were reimbursed a shoestring.

***Excluding city and state taxes, we owed BHE \$67.09 for the privilege of consuming 438 kWh from the grid, and we were credited \$7.14 for the 288 kWh we put out to the grid.***

Black Hills Energy had no expense associated with the generation of the 288 kWh we sent to the grid, no shipping of coal, no drilling, no piping, no processing. They simply received the energy, ready to be sold again at a rate many times greater than they paid for it.

BHE spokesperson Mutch Ucera misled the public with his statements in the April 28 Rapid City Journal article covering this topic, and that is concerning. We do not "bank" kWh with BHE as Mr. Ucera stated; BHE does not offer net metering in South Dakota. We do not trade a kWh for a kWh.

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(Solar producers in Colorado do indeed "bank" kWh with Black Hills Energy, and if one searches the BHE website for an example of a solar bill, the example provided is from Colorado, regardless of which zip code one enters.)

Black Hills Energy's claim that solar producers are not paying to maintain the grid is exaggerated. Not only do we provide BHE with a cheap source of energy, each month we pay "Cost adjustments" and the same \$12 "Customer Charge" as our neighbors without solar.

We knew going into our solar installation project that with how utilities are currently structured in South Dakota we were not going to make money on our solar, and that's okay. We are okay basically donating the production that we can't use, but having Black Hills Energy claim that solar owners are unduly benefiting so that Black Hills Energy can get the rules even more in their favor and squeeze out competition is really

frustrating.

I would be happy to share a copy of our BHE statement. It is hard to miss how lop-sided the arrangement is already when looking at a real customer's bill. If this proposed change goes through, it will be the end of BHE customers investing in renewable systems.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

Tara Haas

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Tara Haas.

Rapid City, SD 57702