

From: Rob McWhorter [REDACTED]
Date: April 23, 2021 at 9:38:01 PM CDT
To: "Hanson, Gary (PUC)"
Cc: [REDACTED] Sonny Rivers [REDACTED], Dan Lederman
[REDACTED], Jeffrey Holbrook [REDACTED]
Subject: [EXT] Black Hills Power Trying to Kill Solar

Dear Commissioner Hanson:

I am writing to decry the efforts by Black Hills Power (d/b/a Black Hills Energy) to basically kill the benefits of individuals' use of solar power (does not apply to "off the grid" users). I am referring to PUC Docket No. EL21-011.

This whole approach is outrageous. It is specifically designed to kill future solar power system installation and usage by individuals, by rendering them completely non-cost effective. Below, I have excerpted some language from an email sent by a solar system provider who lives and works in South Dakota. I ask you to take a hard look at this proposal and turn it down *flat - with prejudice*. Evidently, all the public posturing and PR campaigns by Black Hills Energy to *save* energy is a complete fraud.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. I believe this item is to be taken up by the Commission at your April 29 meeting.

Sincerely,

Rob McWhorter (solar user)

[REDACTED]
Custer, SD 57730
[REDACTED]

EXCERPT

Though there are so many counterarguments to be made, I encourage focusing most on the fact that this tariff amendment would **harm BHE customers** by not allowing them to provide for their own electricity needs through **direct** use of power produced on their own property. This really boils down to **property rights** and would affect everyone regardless of their specific motivation for generating their own energy. BHE is attempting to deprive people of the rights to their own property.

This would also inevitably affect energy storage systems. I can tell you that most people today are interested in solar with energy storage for their own **personal security** against a grid power failure. If customer-generated electricity becomes the property of the utility (by way of interconnection on the grid side of the meter), customers will not be able to provide for their own needs when the grid fails, as it would render their own power systems inert.

However important, I don't believe that environmental concerns will have any weight in this matter, as it is outside the scope of the PUC's objectives (regulating the utility and protecting customers).

The PUC should be asked to deny this in its **entirety**, and not to alter it or compromise with BHE because this proposed amendment is anti-property rights at its core, which again, I see as the most significant argument.

It is not incumbent on the PUC to protect investor-owned utilities from competition by their own customers' self-sufficiency.

"The PUC ensures utility companies in South Dakota provide safe and reliable service and that investor-owned companies do so with just and reasonable rates." <https://puc.sd.gov/whatispuc/default.aspx>