

From: Christine [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 3:44 PM
To: PUC <PUCPF@state.sd.us>
Subject: [EXT] Re: [EXT] Strong Opposition to Docket No. EL25-024 – Xcel Energy’s Proposed 20% Rate Increase

Dear Members of the Public Utilities Commission,

Thank you for your prompt and thorough response to my initial message regarding the proposed 20% rate increase by Xcel Energy under Docket EL25-024. I appreciate your explanation of the review process and the assurances that the Commission is committed to a fact-based, transparent, and lawful evaluation.

While I understand that utilities must generate sufficient revenue to maintain reliable service, I remain gravely concerned about what is considered “just and reasonable” in today’s economic climate. The technical and financial analyses, while essential, must be balanced with the lived reality of everyday citizens. A 20% increase may make sense on a balance sheet—but for families already burdened by inflation, housing costs, and stagnant wages, it translates into real hardship.

It’s also important to recognize that, unlike in other markets, utility customers do not have the freedom to shop around for a more affordable provider. For a large portion of consumers, Xcel Energy is the only option. This lack of competition makes regulatory oversight even more vital, as consumers are effectively captive to the pricing and policies of a single utility provider.

What is deemed “sufficient revenue” for a multi-billion-dollar utility can mean financial breaking points for vulnerable households. I urge the Commission to more deeply weigh this human cost in your deliberations. Safe and reliable service must not come at the expense of making that service unaffordable.

I also respectfully ask whether any consumer impact studies or public hardship analyses will be included in the final decision-making process. If not, I would urge the Commission to consider such factors not as emotional appeals but as necessary data points in a system intended to serve the public good.

As a citizen, I am doing my best to stay informed and engaged, but I also recognize the vast imbalance of power and resources between utility companies and the average consumer. That is why your role as a regulator is so critical. The public cannot simply absorb increases of this magnitude without long-term consequences—especially when they are already struggling.

Thank you again for your time, and for your continued willingness to listen to the people you represent. I trust you will give this matter the deep care and scrutiny it so clearly deserves.

Sincerely,

Christine VandeHoef

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