

From: Anna Quinn [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2026 4:17 PM
To: PUC <PUCPF@state.sd.us>
Subject: Re: [EXT] Public Comment: Oppose Black Hills Energy Rate Increase & Surcharge (Dockets EL26-003 and EL26-024)

Anna Quinn
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Spearfish, SD 57783
[REDACTED]
Personal cell: [REDACTED]

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission,

I am writing as a residential customer (and my husband is a commercial customer as well) of Black Hills Energy in the Black Hills area to formally register my opposition to the combined rate increase now before you: the base rate increase in Docket EL26-003 and the proposed Lange II surcharge (PIPR) in Docket EL26-024. Together, these two requests would raise the average residential bill from \$98.96 to roughly \$143.70 a month — a 45% increase.

This is not a modest adjustment. It is a massive burden being placed on families who are already struggling to afford groceries, housing, and basic necessities. Wages in this region have not risen anywhere close to 45%. Every dollar added to our power bill is a dollar taken directly out of a household budget that, for many of us, is already stretched to the breaking point. I am sure you have seen the state of our economy. The residents of this state are struggling, working multiple jobs, relying on high interest credit cards to fill the gaps. That is not sustainable nor acceptable.

I understand Black Hills Energy has framed this as necessary to fund infrastructure investment and the new Lange II generating plant. But the company is not asking its shareholders to absorb that cost. It is asking the people who can least afford it to cover it, while the company itself continues to report strong profits and pursue an additional merger with NorthWestern Energy. Approving both requests at once means residents are being asked to fund corporate growth and shareholder returns at the direct expense of their own ability to stay housed, fed, and warm. Frankly, the people are sick of these corporations trumping general well-being in this country.

I am asking the Commission to:

1. Reject or substantially reduce both the base rate increase and the Lange II surcharge.
2. Require Black Hills Energy to demonstrate, with full transparency, why costs cannot be absorbed through efficiencies, shareholder equity, or a longer phase-in period rather than passed on to residential customers all at once.
3. Weigh the real, documented hardship this increase will cause for working families, seniors, and those on fixed incomes in the Black Hills region before issuing a decision.

Utility service is not a luxury. It is a basic necessity, and the Commission's job is to make sure a monopoly utility does not use its position to extract more from captive customers than is fair or necessary. I urge you to stand with the people of this state, not with the shareholders of a corporation that answers to investors rather than the families it serves.

Thank you for including this comment in the public record for both dockets.

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Sent from my iPhone