

**From:** Carly Wescott [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2026 8:50 AM  
**To:** PUC-PUC <[PUC@state.sd.us](mailto:PUC@state.sd.us)>  
**Subject:** [EXT] Docket EL26-003

Hello. My name is Carly Wescott. I live at [REDACTED], Rapid City, SD. Phone number [REDACTED].

I am writing to express grave concerns on the proposed rate increase for Black Hills Energy. FYI I will also be contacting my elected representatives on this matter. My understanding is this has to do with "critical infrastructure" that oddly enough hadn't been mentioned publicly prior to the recent merger with the electric company in Montana. It ironically also seems to correspond with the timing of Rapid City's proposed Data Center that none of the citizens of Rapid City want because regardless of what we have been told we know from the experience of people in other cities with Data Centers that it WILL consume a LOT of electricity we would be forced to pay for one way or another! I am furious about this as I am a senior with a limited income that isn't going up 25% to cover the costs of electric bills going up.

My home is all electric. The thermostat is set at 63 during the winter just to be able to afford to pay the bills now! During summer months my home is set at 78 or 79 so I can afford to pay the electric bills. I'm sure Black Hills Energy can come up with a better plan that doesn't hurt people already struggling to pay their bills. This 25% rate increase is ridiculously unfair to customers, especially the elderly and those with limited incomes. It is especially infuriating when we hear Black Hills Energy bragging about spending money over the past several years to change fleets of trucks and utility vehicles over from gas to electric powered which was a massive unnecessary expense. Might have been more prudent to stop spending money on unnecessary high price tag purchases and focus on the infrastructure you suddenly say you need!

Unhappy customer  
Carly Wescott