



Chris Nelson, Chairman  
Kristie Fiegen, Vice Chairperson  
Gary Hanson, Commissioner



## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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May 5, 2026

Farrell Cherry

[REDACTED]  
Rapid City, SD 57702

Dear Mr. Cherry:

Thank you for taking the time to share your concerns regarding Black Hills Energy's proposed rate increase. The full docket, which was opened on February 19, 2026, can be viewed online at [www.puc.sd.gov](http://www.puc.sd.gov) → Commission Actions → Commission Dockets → Electric Dockets → 2026 Electric Dockets → EL26-003 - In the Matter of the Application of Black Hills Power, Inc. dba Black Hills Energy for Authority to Increase Rates For its Utility Service in South Dakota. Your input is an important part of the public process.

To help you understand how the PUC reviews requests for rate increases, I encourage you to look over the enclosed Electric Rate Increase Request Info Guide. It explains the steps we follow and the key factors we consider during our evaluation.

We understand that affordability is a top concern for customers. The Public Utilities Commission takes these matters seriously and is committed to a thorough and transparent review of the proposal. As part of this process, Black Hills Energy is required to provide detailed justification for the increase.

Commission staff analysts and legal counsel are currently conducting a comprehensive review of the company's financial data, operational needs, and the potential impact on customers. This includes multiple rounds of discovery, where staff and expert witnesses request and analyze detailed information from the utility.

Once this comprehensive review is complete, the Commission will publicly discuss the case, ask further questions, and deliberate based on the evidence presented. Each commissioner will then vote to approve, deny, or modify the requested rate increase. It's important to note that the Commission is legally obligated to base its decision on the facts and applicable law and cannot deny a rate increase request without fully vetting the record. We are required to arrive at a reasonable and legally enforceable decision.

Your comments and this response will be posted in the “Comments and Responses” section of the docket. We appreciate your engagement and encourage you to follow the docket as it progresses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Nelson  
Chairman

Enc.