

From: Juan Harrington [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2026 6:08 PM
To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>
Subject: [EXT] Formal Objection to Proposed Black Hills Energy Rate Increase, Docket #EL26-003

To the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission:

My name is Juan Harrington, residing at 3402 Red Rock Canyon Rd, Rapid City SD, and I am a residential electric customer of Black Hills Energy. I am writing to formally object to the proposed rate increase of up to 25% currently before the Commission.

If approved, this increase would raise my household electric bill by approximately \$25 per month on average — an additional \$300 per year. That level of increase is significant and unacceptable given the current economic pressures facing working families.

Even more concerning is the impact on my elderly parents, who live on a fixed income. They would experience an estimated \$75 per month increase — roughly \$900 per year. For seniors with limited, fixed income sources, this type of increase is not sustainable and forces difficult choices between essential needs such as utilities, food, medication, and healthcare.

Research consistently shows that energy costs already represent a disproportionate burden for lower- and fixed-income households. A rate increase of this magnitude will only worsen affordability challenges and increase financial strain for vulnerable residents.

Additionally, as customers in a regulated monopoly service territory, we do not have the option to seek alternative providers if rates become unaffordable. This makes Commission oversight and consumer protection especially critical.

Independent filings show that Black Hills' parent company, Black Hills Corp., has been posting solid profitability in 2025, with strong net income figures and reaffirmed earnings guidance. For example, its first-quarter 2025 financial report showed net income available for common stock of approximately \$134 million, indicating strong earnings while broader economic pressures persist for consumers.

Black Hills Corp. and its subsidiaries — including Black Hills Energy — have also received government subsidies, tax credits, and grant awards totaling tens of millions of dollars over time, including federal grants and state tax rebate incentives that directly reduce corporate tax burdens. According to publicly available subsidy tracking data, Black Hills Corporation entities have received over \$54 million in government subsidies and tax incentives, including both federal grants and state rebates

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Commission to deny or substantially reduce the proposed rate increase and carefully consider the real and measurable financial hardship it will impose on South Dakota households.

Please include this correspondence in the official docket record and notify me of any hearings or decisions related to this matter.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Juan Harrington

[REDACTED]

Rapid City, SD 57702

[REDACTED]