

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2026 7:35 AM
To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>
Subject: [EXT] 30Mar26 PUC Docket EL 26-003 Black Hills Energy application rate increase.

Monday 0634 March 30, 2026

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Public Utilities Commission
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PUC Docket EL 26-003

Subject: Black Hills Energy, Rapid City, SD
PUC Docket EL 26-003 Application for
electricity rate increase.

I am writing in **opposition** to BHE's Application for electricity rate increase to 25% thus becoming a burden on families, fixed income residents, and small businesses.

I suggest a 3% rate increase because of following reasons.

- **Codified Law Chap. 49-34A** Regulating Electric and Gas Utilities.
- **C.L. Law 49-34A-6:** Rates to be reasonable and just. (PUC)
- **C.L. Law 49-34A-8.4:** Burden on utility to establish criteria for determination of rates.
- **C.L. Law 49-34A-11:** Burden of proving reasonableness of rates. (Utility)
- **Senate Bill 135** Mar'26 protect residents from increased utility costs.....
- The **Ratepayer Protection Pledge** Mar'26, Gov't and AI/Data Centers.
- Gov't support/funds/grants/incentives (**Taxpayer's money**) past & present for wild fire mitigation, elect grid improve., infrastructure improve., lower bills programs?

- BHE increase is **suspect** with Aug'25 Lange II Generating Station 99mw natural gas-fired electric generation facility ground breaking.
- BHE increase is **suspect** with Feb'26 Sequitor Edge Modular 2-10mw Data Center announcement.
- **Negotiated** lower rates by AI/Data centers, and other Institutions.
- Gov. Rhoden emergency declaration on Jan'26, **FEMA** assessment \$4.6M for damage to infrastructure, roads, power systems, parks, recreation areas, trails, and public facilities. Distribution to follow.
- Follow BKH stock = \$63-\$72/share it is an energy stock so constant strong earnings.
- **Merger** with NorthWestern Energy (NWE) is proposed, also constant strong earnings.
- I predict one of the 7 Big Tech Corp will buy out BHE, NWE in due time.
- Citizens have been lectured and lectured to buy energy saving bulbs, thermostats, devices, appliances and rates never have decreased.
- 25% rate inc I believe is **not reasonable**.
- **Unjust** to the many fixed income citizens.
- I understand BHE is in business to make money but 25% inc to make \$50M.....
- Is way out of line with 2026 Federal Cost Of Living Allowance (**COLA**) of 2.8%.

In conclusion I believe this is all happening because of AI/Data centers, bad Actors, bad management, and bad legislation.

BHE needs to change their Mission statement: "Improving Life With Energy"; to "Watts up!".

As always PUC Commissioners thank you for the many hours spent on dockets like this, your due diligence, your upholding the Law, and allowing all of us to voice our concerns.