



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

*South Dakota*

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

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March 24, 2026

Raymond Allen

[REDACTED]  
Belle Fourche, SD 57717

Dear Mr. Allen:

Thank you for taking the time to share your concerns regarding Black Hills Energy's proposed rate increase. You'll find the full docket, which was opened on February 19, 2026, on the PUC website: [puc.sd.gov](https://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.

We understand that affordability is a significant concern for customers, especially given recent economic pressures. 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 proposed 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.

To help you better understand how the PUC evaluates rate increase requests, I encourage you to review the enclosed Electric Rate Increase Request Info Guide, which is also

available on the PUC website. This guide outlines the steps and considerations involved in our review.

Your comments and petition 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 black ink that reads "Chris Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "C".

Chris Nelson  
Chairman

Enc.