

From: Taffy Howard [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2026 7:05 PM
To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>
Subject: [EXT] Docket #EL26-003

To whom it may concern,

I am asking to be added to the filing of Richard Bell regarding docket item #EL26-003. My husband and I received notification that BHE is requesting more than a 39% increase in base revenue and they are saying it will be more than a \$25 increase on an average use of 650kWh. To say we were shocked would be putting it mildly. This is not a little increase to adjust for inflation, this is an increase that is going to truly impact ours and other's budgets.

I'm not sure who actually uses that little electricity, but we have an 1800 sq ft house and in the winter we use a wood stove as much as possible, but we still use between 1700-2000 kWh on average throughout the winter. The rest of the year, it averages between 1200-1300kWh. So, for us personally, this would be more than a \$75/month increase, which is outrageous. Even if there is anyone that meets their "average," it would be more than \$300/year. For us, it would be more than \$750/year. This is simply crazy.

I would really like to know exactly what this is for and if it is due to build-out in anticipation of large-use consumers, such as data centers. Is this a request based on residential consumer usage or commercial? It's past time we start requiring large-use consumers, whether they are data centers, battery factories, or whatever, to pay their own way and stop pushing more costs onto residential consumers. Of the \$207.23 most recent statement of ours, \$109.34 is for delivery, and only \$83.18 is for the actual electricity we used. Would this additional \$75+ be for delivery or supply?

And since this is a monopoly and we have no choice or ability to use anyone else for our electricity, I'd like to know, before asking for more than a \$50M increase to their bottom line from ratepayers, what has BHE done to reduce their expenses? What efficiencies were made? Any zero-based budgeting? Where is the proof they tightened their own belt before digging into our pockets for more profits? Have they simply spent more in order to justify this increase and now they want to maintain their profit margin? Where is the evidence they NEEDED to expand (if that is the reason for the increase)? Or is this a case of "if we (BHE) build it, they will come"? The system as it is encourages spending, not restraint, and I am asking you to provide the needed restraint here...please.

Thank you for your time,
Taffy Howard

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Senator, District 34

Chair, Government Operations and Audit

Joint Committee on Appropriations

Senate Appropriations

Senate Military and Veterans Affairs

Rules Review

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