

From: Trent Rhodes [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, September 21, 2026 12:44 PM

To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>

Subject: [EXT] Subject: Public Comment: Strong Opposition to Black Hills Energy Rate Increases (Dockets EL26-003 & EL26-024)

Dear South Dakota Public Utilities Commission,

I am writing to formally express my strong opposition to Black Hills Energy's pending requests to increase its rates (Docket EL26-003 for SD Utility Services) and to amend its phase-in plan rate (Docket EL26-024).

The proposed 45% increase in utility costs for the Black Hills region is unacceptable and unmanageable for everyday residents. While minor increases are a reality, a hike of this magnitude places an unjustifiable burden on families and individuals who are already struggling to make ends meet. It is unreasonable to ask residential customers to shoulder these infrastructure costs while the corporation continues to report strong profits, reward shareholders, and pursue additional mergers.

I urge the Commission to reject this excessive rate increase. Furthermore, I ask that you hold Black Hills Energy accountable by requiring them to demonstrate why these costs cannot be absorbed through internal efficiencies, shareholder equity, or a substantially longer phase-in period, rather than passing the financial burden directly onto residential customers all at once.

These hardships are real, and our community cannot afford this. Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to the residents of South Dakota. Please include my opposition and comments in the official record for both dockets.

Sincerely,

Trent Rhodes

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