

From: PUC

Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2026 6:44 AM

To: 'Veronica [REDACTED]'

Subject: RE: [EXT] Formal Opposition to Proposed Rate Increase based on SDCL49-34A-11 and 49-34A-8.4

Ms. Baxley – This is in response to your comments submitted to the Public Utilities Commission. Your comments relate to three separate dockets:

- [EL25-022](#) - In the Matter of the Application of Otter Tail Power Company for Authority to Increase Its Electric Rates in South Dakota, was opened on June 4, 2025. The Commission issued its decision in this docket on March 12, 2026.
- [EL25-024](#) - In the Matter of the Application of Northern States Power Company dba Xcel Energy for Authority to Increase its Electric Rates, was opened on June 30, 2025.
- [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, was opened on February 19, 2026.

Regarding docket EL25-024, Xcel Energy's request for authority to increase its electric rates, a settlement stipulation was filed with the Commission on April 24, 2026. The stipulation and supporting materials were submitted by the docket parties—including Xcel Energy, PUC staff, and an intervenor—for the Commission's consideration. The Commission will publicly discuss the settlement stipulation, ask questions, and deliberate based on the evidence presented at its regular meeting on May 8, 2026. Each Commissioner will then vote to approve, deny, or modify the rate increase proposed in the stipulation. You can view the meeting agenda at <https://puc.sd.gov/agendas/2026/0508.aspx>

Regarding EL26-003, Black Hills Energy's request for authority to increase its electric rates, 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, during which staff and expert witnesses request and analyze detailed information from the utility. The Public Utilities Commission is committed to a thorough and transparent review. As part of this process, Black Hills Energy is required to provide detailed justification for the proposed increase.

To help you better understand how the PUC evaluates rate increase requests, I encourage you to review the [Electric Rate Increase Request Info Guide](#) available on the PUC website. This guide outlines the steps and considerations involved in our review.

Your comments and this response will be posted in the "Comments and Responses" section of dockets EL25-022, EL25-024 and EL26-003.

*Chris Nelson, Chairman
Public Utilities Commission
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