

From: Frank Kloucek [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2026 1:02 PM
To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>
Cc: Frank Kloucek [REDACTED]
Subject: [EXT] Public Testimony for Ad Hoc meeting today. Please share with staff and Commissioners.
Thank you very much Frank Kloucek

Frank Kloucek Public Testimony Wednesday June 24th submitted at 12:52 pm on Buyout of Northwestern Energy by Black Hills Power and Light

Honorable PUC Commissioners Hanson Fiegen and Nelson
I am Frank Kloucek [REDACTED] Scotland SD 57059
email [REDACTED] phone [REDACTED]

I am offering public testimony today on the buyout of Northwestern Energy by Black Hills Power and Light and have some concerns about the proposal

1 If this proposal is agreed to by the SD PUC it will mean a super monopoly of the energy industry in the midwest. It will be very similar to the size of the Enron company. Unfortunately, we know how that turned out.

2 Much ado is given to the fact the current CEO will take the reins in the merger and the other CEO will retire. That is not the issue. The issue is how the board will be selected and if they will be a strong board or not and who the CEO will be in the future. We all remember the huge scandal several years ago that caused the failure of the original company Northwestern Public Service. We certainly want to learn from our mistakes.

3 I am requesting the former Consumer Affairs Division of Black Hills Power and Light to be reinstated in Rapid City and public access to the building be allowed and not locked as is currently done. I request that there be such consumer affair offices throughout the Black Hills Power and Light territories in and out of state.

4 Transparency,, transparency, transparency!. In my short years of public service and involvement in leadership in organizations, the biggest problem was executive sessions without public or stakeholder involvement. Decisions were made on important issues that had nothing to do with personnel issues.

5 Data centers are a huge concern. The current data center proposal named JADE is at a rural location 10 miles from Cheyenne, capturing 3700 acres of Wyoming land, will certainly cause huge energy consumption issues. Although the initial usage will be 1.8 Gigawatts (1 gigawatt will power 750,000 homes) the final usage is projected to be 10 Kilo watts which will use the electricity from 10 nuclear power plants. Water usage and many other factors are a huge concern. What the impact will be on the consumers wherever these data centers are located is an issue we should all be concerned about.

6 Will the mega merger monopoly be more efficient or will it be too big to address repair and replacement of lines, expansion of lines and transmission substations? Will Black Hills Power and Light be able to service the area effectively? Will they treat consumers, employees and investors fairly?

7 Several weeks ago on a Sunday an employee of Northwestern Energy from the Yankton office answered the call of an emergency situation north of Scotland. The power went off and the life alert alarms went off for the couple. Dan Albrecht, a key Northwestern Service employee answered the call and was at the location forty five minutes later to restore electrical power. What could have been a life-threatening situation became a life-saving one. Will dedicated employees like Dan be able to respond to these situations in a timely fashion with this proposal?

8 Montana PUC appears is hesitant to approve the loss of workers. Montana provides a huge amount of generation. Nebraska PUC recently approved the merger with the agreement that rates would not increase but it appears that BH P&L has already proposed a flat 11 dollars a month increase per customer which is a 132 dollar yearly increase. That is a weeks' worth of groceries. Black Hills Power and Light is in eight states While Northwestern Energy is in two states 15.4 million dollar merger will be huge. [April 15th, 2026 Northwestern Black Hills Merger raising concerns Daily Montanian author Keila Fzpaller]

9 Wyoming is already experiencing power shortages due to the increased demand for electricity by the data centers. In conclusion, I am asking for a pause in approving this merger to get more public testimony and much more documentation from Northwestern Energy & Black Hills Power and Light especially on their proposals concerning data. This is a huge issue and a huge concern to the customers of these two companies and the general public as well. Please pause the approval of this merger at this time.

One of the duties of a PUC Commissioner is to conduct hearings and investigations on utility practices and policies. Thank you for doing so and considering a pause in approving this merger.

Thanks for allowing public testimony today.

Frank Kloucek