

**Subject:** GE25-001 BH/NWE Merger Application

**Date:** Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at 8:38:03 PM Central Standard Time

**From:** Bill Taylor

**To:** Edwards, Kristen

**CC:** Shields, Caitlin, Sabers, Cathy, Schaefbauer, Logan, Norcott, Sarah, John Taylor

Commission General Counsel Edwards:

This evening Black Hills and Northwestern filed a motion for a Stipulated Protective Order in this case.

Weeks ago I asked BH/NWE to allow me to see the confidential filings in the docket and to see the confidential materials in their responses to Staff interrogatories. They declined on the premise that they wanted a protective order in place before allowing me to see the confidential filings.

BH attorney Caitlin Shields proposed a draft motion and order addressing confidentiality. After several weeks of discussion and negotiation, yesterday we agreed on the form for the Stipulated Protective Order.

Because of the unsupported commentary in the draft BH/NWE motion, I proposed the parties sign a stipulation allowing the Commission to sign and enter the Stipulated Protective Order without hearing and without notice. BH and NWE declined my proposal for a simple stipulation allowing entry of the order. Instead they filed the subject motion.

I still have not seen any of the confidential filings and given the timelines involved, cannot afford to wait any longer.

I want the record to be clear.....my agreement to allow the Stipulated Protective Order to be signed and entered without notice and without hearing does not mean that I agree with, adopt or waive objection to the unsupported commentary made in the BH/NWE motion. It only means that I agree the proposed Stipulated Protective Order can be entered without hearing and without notice, which I hope will happen tomorrow.

The purpose of this email is to make my record. Tomorrow I'll submit it for inclusion in the docket.

**William Taylor**

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