
From: David Steele[SMT] [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 9:34:49 AM
To: PUC
Subject: Excel Energy Proposed Rate Hike
Auto forwarded by a Rule

6/24/2014

South Dakota Public Utilities Commissioners,

Excel Energy has requested a 8% increase on South Dakota consumers for whom they provide service. Please DO NOT award Excel Energy any rate increase for this year.

In 2013 you awarded excel energy a 9.06 increase in the electrical rates charged to South Dakotans. Now, a year later, Excel energy is requesting an additional 8% increase on South Dakota consumers. In a two year span, if you approve this latest request, this amounts to a 17% increase on South Dakota customers; nearly 4.5 times more than inflation over that same period.

During 2013, Excel energy posted a profit of larger than 5% in each of the four yearly quarters and a high of nearly 13% in the third quarter. This company is profitable and continues to be so. It is time that excel energy invest some of their own profits into improving their infrastructure and not requiring the customers they serve to pay dramatically higher rates every year, while they generate millions in profit and pay additional millions to their stock holders. What's more, perhaps the millions they paid for a private jet for their CEO could have been more prudently spent in updating their infrastructure, the purpose Excel Energy argues necessitates this proposed rate increase.

Energy is not entertainment. The electric bill is not something families can cut back on or do without. Last year we paid 9.06% more due to the rate approval given to Excel Energy. This increase hurt those who can afford it least, families at or below the poverty line and seniors on fixed incomes. It also stings middle class families with children who can ill afford a 17% increase over a two year period in their electric costs. Any money that a family uses to cover increases in electrical costs directly hurts South Dakota communities as those families have less money to spend within those communities. Less disposable income, caused by electrical rate hikes, HARMS South Dakota communities. Allowing another increase, just a year removed from a rate increase of 9.06%, is excessive at the least, and offense at worst.

These two hikes together, cumulatively, will substantially effect most South Dakota families in an economically disparaging manner. Please deny Excel Energy's rate increase request. It's the right thing to do.

Regards,

David Steele
[REDACTED]