

From: Don/Sheila De Vries [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 10:02 AM
To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>
Subject: [EXT] Black Hills Energy rate increase

Please see my letter attached regarding the proposed rate increase for Black Hills Energy. I hope I have not missed any deadline for submitting my comments.

Don De Vries

De Vries
[REDACTED]
Hot Springs, SD 57747
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

May 12, 2021
South Dakota PUC
PUC@state.sd.us
Re: Proposed Black Hills Energy Rate Increase

Dear Sirs:

I have never commented on any proposed rate increase before, so am not sure of the proper procedure. However, the proposed rate increase, called a tariff in some of my reading, will force people with solar panels to sell all energy to BHE, and buy back the same energy at a highly increased rate. This tariff, if approved, would update the requirements for most behind the meter generation installations now, and all by 2041. I am hoping this tariff is not approved, it goes against basic thought of conserving energy, which I had assumed BHE has promoted.

BHE currently has an In-Home energy audit program, and even that program promotes conserving energy. This program looks at not only electricity and gas, but also water. They promote the use of LED bulbs, another way to conserve energy. I have personally tried for years to conserve energy, recycle products when possible, eliminate waste, and have owned a hybrid car, etc. Now BHE simply wants to guarantee they would be the only electric energy source in the future. This goes against the grain of being prepared for emergencies.

I can't argue the fact that it costs BHE to build and maintain an electrical grid, and having access to the grid certainly has value. The proposed tariff does not justly charge for having the energy available, but tries to eliminate any other source of electric energy in the future. I was Mayor of Hot Springs for years, and we had the philosophy of charging for having the utilities available, but never dreamed of charging the full rate of utility use, even if none or very

little was used. So, I can't argue having the service available has value. But, this value has to have a reasonable charge for the potential consumer.

I have been seriously considering installing solar panels on my home, and believe if this tariff is approved, and I decide to install solar panels, I will be forced to also buy a generator to supplement my energy use for the few high demand times needed, instead of being connected to the BHE grid at all. If this is the decision, BHE will still have the same infrastructure in place, with no revenue at all from me. If others feel the same as me, this could cause more people to be completely off the electric grid, and might even cause smaller neighborhoods to install their own electric generating system to handle the few times it is needed.

In closing, I do not support this rate increase at all, and hope you deny BHE this unreasonable request. I live near Hot Springs, and if I decide to buy all of my groceries in Rapid City, or Chadron Nebraska, I don't want to ever see the local grocery stores send me a bill for having bread and milk available in case I want it.

Thank you for your consideration.