

February 11, 2019

Daniel P. Wolf
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

RE: **Comments of the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources**
Docket No. E, G002/M-19-134

Dear Mr. Wolf:

Attached are the comments of the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources (Department) in the following matter:

Northern States Power Company's Petition for Approval of Modifications to the Company's Standard Billing Form to add Certain Spanish Translation Elements.

The Petition was filed on February 1, 2019 by:

Gail Baranko
Regulatory Manager
Xcel Energy
414 Nicollet Mall – 401 7th Floor
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(612) 330-6935

The Department recommends that the Commission **approve Northern States Power Company's proposal**. The Department is available to answer any questions that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission may have.

Sincerely,

/s/Gemma Miltich
Financial Analyst

GM/ja
Attachment



Before the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

Comments of the Minnesota Department of Commerce Division of Energy Resources

Docket No. E, G002/M-19-134

I. INTRODUCTION

On February 1, 2019, Northern States Power Company (Xcel Energy or the Company) filed a petition for approval to modify the Company's Minnesota Electric and Natural Gas Rate Books by adding Spanish language translations to certain labels on the current bill format. In its petition, the Company requests permission to add Spanish translation to the "Account Balance" and "Amount Due" labels in its electric and natural gas bills.

According to Xcel Energy, the proposed modifications will help its Spanish-speaking customers better understand their energy bill and result in fewer customer phone calls to the Company for inquiries regarding basic bill elements. Xcel Energy cites Minnesota State Demographic Center data in its petition, demonstrating that, after English, Spanish is the most commonly spoken language in Minnesota homes. The Company also explained that its affiliate, Southwestern Public Service Company (SPS), observed positive results after adding Spanish translations, similar to those proposed in the current petition, to the SPS billing format.

II. DEPARTMENT ANALYSIS

The Department agrees with the Company that the proposed modifications to the electric and natural gas bill labels will positively impact its Spanish-speaking customers' understanding of their energy bills. If more customers understand their energy bill, it logically follows that the Company will receive fewer customer inquiries for clarification on the basic bill elements. Reducing the volume of customer inquiries may create an opportunity to improve the Company's efficiency in its customer service operations.

III. DEPARTMENT CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on its review, the Department recommends that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission approve Xcel Energy's proposed modifications to its Minnesota Electric and Natural Gas Rate Books as requested in its petition.

/ja

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Sharon Ferguson, hereby certify that I have this day, served copies of the following document on the attached list of persons by electronic filing, certified mail, e-mail, or by depositing a true and correct copy thereof properly enveloped with postage paid in the United States Mail at St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Minnesota Department of Commerce
Comments**

Docket No. E,G002/M-19-134

Dated this 11th day of February 2019

/s/Sharon Ferguson

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