



Control Number: 51415



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James M. Hernholm
108 Christal Drive
Longview, Texas 75601-8702
jhernho@aol.com

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PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

February 03, 2021

Public Utility Commission of Texas
1701 North Congress Avenue 7th Floor
PO Box 13326
Austin, Texas 78701-3326

Dear Commissioners:

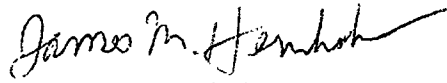
I am writing in regard to Southwestern Electric Power Company's Petition and Statement of Intent to change rates that was filed on October 13, 2020 with the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) in Docket Number 51415.

I ask that the PUC strongly consider denying the requested rate increases, or at least table them for review at some future date, such as post-pandemic, or reduce the requested rate increases for the following reasons.

1. While Southwestern Electric Power Company (SWEPCO) states reasons that I will assume are acceptable in many instances in the past for the requested rate increases, the company would seem to be out of touch with the reality of the effect of the current pandemic that has been going on for approximately a year now and is projected to continue for at least the majority of 2021. While certainly not all, but many individuals have lost their jobs or seen their livelihood reduced due to the pandemic, have had to turn to food banks for the first time to help provide adequate food for their families, or had to turn to other public and private assistance to help make ends meet, including paying utility bills.
2. Many commercial establishments, particularly local small businesses, municipalities, etc., have seen their profits or revenue decline due to such things as less foot traffic in their establishment due to recommended or mandated pandemic health guidelines and general health concerns, leading to reduced sales; fewer sales tax dollars due to the same reduced sales, etc.
3. For individuals on fixed incomes, such as retirees, an average residential rate increase of 15.64 percent (number obtained from SWEPCO's website) would definitely be felt in many cases, and this would be in addition to the 12.7 percent increase SWEPCO was granted in December 2017 and the 6 percent increase the utility was granted in March 2014.

I would like to thank the commissioners for their time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James M. Hernholm". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

James M. Hernholm