

Dear Commissioners,

I want to express my appreciation of your efforts to address the utility rate increases that have been having devastating impacts on our Colorado communities. As the Commission correctly recognized, there is urgent need to holistically assess the actual budgetary needs of our utility, Xcel Energy, and to end the practice of these one-off rate increases that don't fully appreciate the overall cumulative effect to rate payers, particularly those who have a high energy burden.

I recently read a statement attributed to Robert Kenney, President for Xcel Energy-Colorado, about help available for customers struggling to pay bills. While the bill assistance programs are profoundly important and have provided critical help to many in our community, there are many struggling to pay bills who do not qualify for these programs. Families earning just above the income limits, our small businesses, our non-profits and so many more have seen bills that are double what they were just a year ago.

As an example, we have 1300 families in Boulder living in manufactured housing who on extreme cold days must keep their heat near 70 degrees to keep their pipes from freezing, yet just as the life-threatening arctic cold was arriving Xcel sent a message of rising costs, encouraging everyone to lower their thermostats. These already struggling families were faced with an untenable choice. They are not alone. Many in our community have shared how deeply they dread their next utility bill. This constant rise in energy cost is pushing more and more of our households toward energy poverty.

I do appreciate the challenges facing Xcel from the impacts of inflation, supply chain issues and volatile natural gas costs as well as the need to invest in the transmission and distribution systems to improve reliability and resilience. However, it seems there are still opportunities to tighten the belt a bit and make sure it is not just Xcel's customers who must bear the brunt of these financially challenging times.

Again, I am appreciative of all your hard work in support of the utility customers in our state. On behalf of our community, I ask that you do scrutinize this proposed rate increase and ensure that any costs passed on to our community members are truly about the delivery of safe and reliable service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Brocket', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Aaron Brocket
Mayor, City of Boulder