

Quote Sheet for Intervention in NorthWestern Data Center Tariff Proceeding

“NorthWestern Energy is trying to sneak even more additional costs into your electricity bill with this case,” said **Terry Minow, chair of Big Sky 55+, a group of older adults advocating for better, more affordable policies in Montana**. “We believe that any additional costs related to data centers that will be passed along to consumers should be public, not made in a backroom deal with out-of-state tech billionaires.”

“The devil is always in the details when it comes to secret deals and there’s quite a few horns poking out of this proposal,” said **Erik Nylund of the Butte Watchdogs for Social and Environmental Justice**. “Montanans are already being crushed with rising costs of everything and we can’t be expected to blindly subsidize profits for out-of-state corporations.”

“We are increasingly concerned that NorthWestern Energy prefers leaving Montanans in the dark while making deals with data centers,” said **Amy Cilimburg, executive director of Climate Smart Missoula**. “We have the right to know and participate in decisions that could dramatically affect our utility bills, and we know that affordable electricity is lifesaving. We need the PSC to protect customers and demand public transparency from NorthWestern.”

“NorthWestern Energy plans to enter into ‘secret contracts’ with data center developers that will continue to leave Montanans in the dark about impacts to our utility bills,” said **Maxine Sugarman, associate attorney with Earthjustice’s Northern Rockies Office**. “NorthWestern cannot redefine the rules to limit the role of the Public Service Commission or exclude Montanans from these conversations. The commission has a statutory obligation to protect ratepayers from the costs associated with these data centers. We are intervening in this proceeding to protect residential customers, ensure transparency, and hold NorthWestern and data center developers accountable.”

“HICA remains concerned that NorthWestern Energy is moving forward on data center agreements without addressing utility costs for working and low-income Montana residents, without concern for additional environmental damage, and without the openness and transparency Montana citizens expect,” said **Hank Hudson with Helena Interfaith Climate Advocates**. “Slow down and do this right.”

“Time and time again we witness data center developers and companies like NorthWestern Energy push secret contracts with municipal bodies to manufacture consent while refusing to respond to the concerns of community members who will bear the costs of these data centers. Not only does this sow public mistrust in decision makers who move forward in this way, it also begs the question, “what is there to hide?” **said Krystal Two Bulls, Executive Director of Honor the Earth**. “We know that communities across the country are already paying the costs of destructive data centers while corporations benefit. Montanans deserve transparency, especially Indigenous, low-income and rural communities, all of whom have long been targets of industry exploitation.”

“Montanans need transparency to ensure that families and small businesses aren’t subsidizing the electricity costs of data centers as has happened all over the country,” said **Shannon James with the Montana Environmental Information Center**. “NorthWestern’s proposed tariff is inadequate and provides no guarantee that Montanans won’t be forced to pay more for electricity because of data centers. We are intervening to make sure Montanans are protected.”

“MontPIRG students are urging the PSC to protect them and fellow Montanans from the potential threats that data centers pose, specifically increased rates and environmental degradation,” said **Dean McGovern, executive director with MontPIRG**.

“If these data centers are such a good deal for Montanans, then why is NorthWestern keeping details secret from the public while seeking to reduce Commission oversight?” said **Derek Goldman, Montana policy and regulatory associate with the NW Energy Coalition**. “As developers in the A.I. tech industry set up shop in Montana, we hope the PSC will ensure transparency and protect existing energy customers from bearing costs associated with serving data centers.”