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Fargo, North Dakota 58102
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May 5, 2022

—VIA ELECTRONIC FILING AND U.S. MAIL—

Steven M. Kahl, Executive Director
North Dakota Public Service Commission, Dept. 408
State Capitol, 600 E. Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58504-0480

RE: IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW BILL CREDIT RIDER TARIFF
Case No. PU-22-___

Dear Mr. Kahl:

Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, hereby submits to the North Dakota Public Service Commission this petition for approval of a new electric rider tariff which would enable the Company to timely and efficiently distribute to its North Dakota electric customers various types of billing credits, refunds, gains, or other bill adjustments that result in reduced energy bills.

The proposed tariff, called the Bill Credit Rider (BCR), is an innovative approach to providing timelier implementation of various types of billing credits to our North Dakota electric customers. Currently, Xcel Energy must schedule credit issuances across its five state NSP System within a “sequential credit queue” in the billing system. This typically results in added complexity and delays in getting these credits issued to customers. The proposed BCR Rider will enable the Company to apply many types of billing credits more quickly and efficiently as the process to set up, test, and implement the credit will be less burdensome.

If you have any questions about this tariff proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

David H. Sederquist
Sr. Consultant, Regulation & Finance

cc: Adam Renfandt

Enclosures

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Julie Fedorchak | Chair |
| Randy Christmann | Commissioner |
| Sheri Haugen-Hoffart | Commissioner |

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF
NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY
FOR APPROVAL OF A BILL CREDIT RIDER

CASE NO. PU-22-____

PETITION

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to ND Century Code 49-05-05, Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, submits to the North Dakota Public Service Commission this Petition for approval of an electric *Bill Credit Rider* (BCR).

If approved, this proposed tariff would create a timely, efficient, and flexible rate mechanism for issuing various types of refunds, credits, gains, or other adjustments (Bill Credits) which will benefit our North Dakota electric customers. At the same time, it would eliminate the delays, complexity, and administrative burden of implementing credits under the Company's current "queue" refund process.

I. GENERAL FILING INFORMATION

Pursuant to § 69-02-02-04 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, the following information is provided.

A. Utility Employee Responsible for Filing

David H. Sederquist
Sr. Regulatory and Financial Consultant
2302 Great Northern Drive
PO Box 2747
Fargo, ND 58108-2747
(701) 241-8632

We request that all communications regarding this proceeding, including data requests, also be directed to:

Lynnette Sweet
Regulatory Administrator
Xcel Energy
414 Nicollet Mall – 401, 7th Floor
Minneapolis, MN 55401
Regulatory.Records@xcelenergy.com

B. Date of Filing and Proposed Effective Date

This Petition is being filed May 5, 2022. Xcel Energy requests the BCR tariff be effective on July 1, 2022.

II. BACKGROUND

In recent years, Xcel Energy has issued an increasing number of customer bill credits and/or refunds across its five upper midwest NSP System states. These credits/refunds (Bill Credits) are primarily a result of various rate mechanisms such as earnings cap/sharing arrangements, sales decoupling true-ups, service quality performance penalties, and interim rate refunds, to name a few. The Company has also issued other types of refunds/credits to customers including annual spent nuclear fuel settlement payments from the Department of Energy (DOE) and proceeds from gains realized from the sale of assets.

Some of these Bill Credits are applicable to all NSP System states while others may be unique to a given state or jurisdiction. Depending on the Bill Credit type, it can take up to 8 weeks to develop, test, and issue a given credit/refund. Adding to that time, however, is a significant limitation of the Company's billing system: it is only able to process one type of credit or refund at a time, meaning that each credit or refund must be placed into a sequential "credit queue" along with all other Bill Credits from each NSP state. Depending on the number of refunds or credits to be processed, and the position of a credit in the queue, this process can result in delays of several months. With the increase in refunds and credits in recent years, the current "credit queue" backlog is becoming untenable, delaying some credit issuances by over 6 months from the time the credit or refund amount becomes known.

Over the past few years, the Company has pursued – and the Commission approved – a number of strategies to minimize the delay in issuing Bill Credits for North Dakota customers such as 1) combining multiple credits or refunds into a single Bill Credit, 2) netting Bill Credits against rate case increases, and 3) using the the Fuel Cost Rider as a crediting mechanism. However, these approaches, while more timely, are not ideal as they still require a fair amount of set-up, Commission review and approval, and sometimes waivers of existing rules, such as the Fuel Adjustment Clause rules. Generally speaking, the Company does not consider these more creative approaches to be viable long-term crediting options.

With this Petition, the Company proposes to establish a Bill Credit Rider (BCR) to create a more efficient and flexible rate mechanism to pass benefits to customers and eliminate our reliance on the sequential credit queue or other "stop gap" approaches to reduce customer bills through issuance of the various types of Bill Credits.

III. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED BCR TARIFF

The proposed BCR offers a more timely and efficient billing mechanism for passing various types of Bill Credits to customers. It would also enable more accurate tracking of qualifying credits/refunds than the Fuel Cost Rider because the process of truing-up any over- or under-distributions of a specific Bill Credit can be more easily managed and reported. Another feature of the BCR is that Bill Credits could be implemented at any time of the year and for the length of time best suited for the given Bill Credit. In addition, the BCR could accommodate a single Bill Credit or multiple Bill Credits, implemented at various times of the year, and in effect over varying time periods.

The BCR would offer several advantages over the current one-time “credit queue” methodology that the Company relies on today for issuing most types of Bill Credits to customers. First, as previously mentioned, there would be no requirement to schedule the North Dakota credit/refund within the Company’s sequential “credit queue” along with other credits and refund obligations the Company must transact in its other NSP states. The credit queue often contains enough credits and/or refunds to delay issuance of a Bill Credit in North Dakota by half a year or more. The BCR can be used to distribute a Bill Credit as soon as Commission staff has reviewed the Bill Credit factor calculation and resulting BCR rate, and it is approved by the Commission.

Second, for many types of recurring, smaller Bill Credits, the development of a Bill Credit factor for use in the BCR would be much less complex, require less billing “set up,” and it would be easier to test than the current one-time bill credit queue approach. To be sure, certain types of refunds, such as an interim rate refund associated with a general base rate proceeding, will continue to be administered via the current one-time bill credit process because of its significance and objective to accurately return to each customer the excess interim rates paid during the interim rate period. However, other types of Bill Credits such as those resulting from the proceeds of DOE nuclear spent fuel payments or the gains from the sale of utility plant are generally not directly tied to any specific charges customers have already paid. It is reasonable in those cases to distribute credits to customers in a fair and efficient manner, such as electric usage.

Thirdly, the BCR can accommodate more than one Bill Credit type at a time, further reducing the time to get credits issued to customers. Each Bill Credit type would be separately established, tracked, and true-up. Moreover, reporting of the Bill Credit distribution and true-up calculations can be provided more easily and will be more transparent than if the credit was being issued through the Fuel Cost Rider. The BCR rate would reflect the summation of all included Bill Credit factors and enable a single credit to appear on a customer’s bill, quite possibly throughout the year.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

Generally, once the total amount of a Bill Credit is known, the Company first determines the North Dakota jurisdictional share using an appropriate and approved jurisdictional allocator, if needed. This North Dakota portion of the Bill Credit, and the related total interest forecasted to accrue over the issue period, would then be allocated to each customer class using the applicable class allocation factors approved in the most recent rate proceeding. The customer class Bill Credit (with interest)

would then be divided by the forecasted kWh sales within each customer class during the selected future recovery period to arrive at a Bill Credit factor per kWh for each customer class specific to the particular credit type. This factor (or the sum of multiple factors if there is more than one Bill Credit being issued at the same time) would constitute the overall BCR rate proposed to go into effect for each customer class (essentially a negative “rate”).

The proposed BCR rate for each class, along with the underlying Bill Credit factors if there is more than one, would then be filed with the Commission for review and approval. Once approved, the proposed BCR rates for each class could be effectuated in the following month. The class BCR rates would be applied to each customer’s kWh electric usage in each monthly bill during the prescribed credit period. It is anticipated that a BCR rate would likely be in place throughout the year, on an ongoing basis, assuming that there will always be at least one Bill Credit type (such as the DOE nuclear fuel credit) being issued over a 12 month period. Again, in situations where there is more than one Bill Credit type being issued through the BCR, the BCR rate would reflect the aggregate of the multiple Bill Credit factors.

At the conclusion of the approved issuance period for each Bill Credit being issued through the BCR, any material over- or under- issuance for each Bill Credit would be true-up over a subsequent true-up period established for the specific type of Bill Credit. If the Bill Credit was of a non-recurring nature (such as an earnings sharing refund or the gain on an asset sale), the true-up period might be as short as a single month, with possibly subsequent monthly adjustments until the full amount was issued.¹ If the Bill Credit was a recurring type (such as the proceeds from the DOE’s payments for spent nuclear fuel damages), the true-up would be netted against the following year’s Bill Credit amount to determine the new BCR rate. The particulars concerning class allocation factors, effective date, term of credit issuance, and true-up methodologies would be established in the approved application for each Bill Credit type proposed to be included in the BCR.

Example: DOE Spent Fuel Proceeds

It may be helpful to describe the functionality of the BCR by demonstrating how the DOE Spent Fuel proceeds could be issued through this tariff. If we assume DOE Payment #13 to the Company is \$16.0 million, then the NSPM operating company portion would be approximately 86 percent, or \$13,760,000. The North Dakota jurisdictional credit is approximately 6 percent of the NSPM amount, or \$825,600.

¹ A Bill Credit is typically considered “fully issued” once the issued amount immaterially exceeds the Bill Credit amount.

The North Dakota allocation of interest that has accrued on the funds while held in the dedicated external bank account is added to the forecasted interest earned during the proposed issuance period (we will assume 12 months in this example). The total interest amount is added to the North Dakota credit, and the overall credit is allocated to customer class based on nuclear-related allocators approved in Case No. PU-20-441. The process to this point is very similar to what is typically done for most types of billing credit.

The customer class credit amount is then divided by the forecasted kWh sales in each class during the 12 month issuance period to determine the class BCR factor per kWh (and the BCR rate itself, since, in this example, this is the only Billing Credit being issued in the BCR). During the issuance period the BCR rate is then applied to actual monthly kWh usage on each bill during the issuance period to determine the monthly credit amount.

Bill Description

The Company will add a description of the BCR credit in the glossary section found on the back of its energy bills for customer reference. The proposed description is as follows:

Bill Credit Rider – Reflects bill credits due customers for various reasons including earnings cap refunds, gains on asset sales, tax law changes, Dept. of Energy payments, rate adjustments, etc.

V. PROPOSED TARIFFS

The following proposed tariff sheets are included in this Petition. Attachment A (legislative version) and Attachment B (non-legislative version) show in detail the revised Tables of Contents and the proposed Bill Credit Rider.

Contents of Attachments A (legislative) and B (non-legislative):

| Description | Sheet # | Revision # |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| Table of Contents | 1-2 | 9 th |
| Rate Schedules Table of Contents | 5-TOC-2 | 11 th |
| Bill Credit Rider | 5-93 | Original |
| Bill Credit Rider (cont.) | 5-94 | Original |

In lieu of including a specific rate on Tariff Sheet 5-92, we propose to publish the current Bill Credit Rider rates and other details on xcelenergy.com consistent with the information currently provided for the Fuel Cost Rider. Listing BCR rates in this

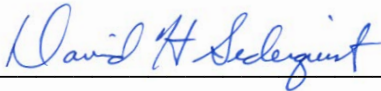
manner will ensure timely posting of the rates and mitigate administrative and filing delays should there be multiple tariff sheet changes.

CONCLUSION

The Company respectfully requests the Commission approve its proposed Bill Credit Rider and changes to the Table of Contents sections of its Electric Rate Book NDPSC No. 2. This proposal would benefit all of Xcel Energy's electric customers in North Dakota by allowing for a timely and efficient issuance of applicable customer refunds and credits.

Dated: May 5, 2022

Northern States Power Company

By: 
DAVID H. SEDERQUIST
SR. REGULATORY CONSULTANT
XCEL ENERGY (NORTH DAKOTA)

Legislative

NORTH DAKOTA ELECTRIC RATE BOOK - NDPSO NO. 2

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 89th Revised Sheet No. 2

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(Continued on Sheet No. 1-3)

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| Date Filed: | 03-26-24 <u>05-05-22</u> | By: Christopher B. Clark | Effective Date: | 10-01-24 |
| | | President, Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation | | |
| Case No. | PU- 20-44122- | | Order Date: | 08-18-24 |

NORTH DAKOTA ELECTRIC RATE BOOK – NDPSO NO. 2

RATE SCHEDULES
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1~~0~~¹th Revised Sheet No. TOC-2

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| <u>10. Bill Credit Rider</u> | <u>5-93</u> | <u>N</u> |

APPLICATION

Generally applicable to monthly kilowatt-hour (kWh) usage provided under all Company retail electric rate schedules. Applicable customer classes or groups may vary, however, depending on the specific purpose of each type of refund, proceed, gain, or credit ("Bill Credit") that is approved for issuance through this Rider.

BILL CREDIT RIDER (BCR)

When the Company seeks to issue, either voluntarily or upon Commission order, one or more types of BCR-qualifying Bill Credit(s) to customers, there will be included on each customer's monthly bill a corresponding Bill Credit Rider (BCR) adjustment. The total BCR credit amount on each bill will be determined by multiplying a customer's monthly billed kWh for electric service by the BCR rate.

DETERMINATION OF RATE

The development of a monthly BCR rate will reflect the summation of the specific rates determined for each type of qualifying Bill Credit being issued, based on the methodologies approved by the Commission within each of the applicable case proceedings. Unless otherwise prescribed, each Bill Credit obligation included in the BCR will first be assigned to customer class using the allocation methods approved in the most recent Class Cost of Service Study. The BCR rate for each customer class will reflect the summed rates of each type of active Bill Credit as well as any carryover balance (i.e., true-up) associated with each Bill Credit. The BCR rate for each class may be adjusted at any time during the year, depending on 1) when new Bill Credits are approved for inclusion, 2) when the designated true-up period begins for each Bill Credit, and/or 3) when there is a need for a correction or adjustment. Supporting computations for each change in the BCR rate will be filed with the Commission at least 45 days before the proposed effective date of the BCR rate change. The current BCR rate for each customer class can be found at the Company's website (xcelenergy.com).

The Company will separately account for each qualifying Bill Credit, their remaining balances, and associated annual true-ups until each Bill Credit obligation has been fully distributed to customers.

QUALIFYING BILL CREDITS

Types of Bill Credits which qualify for inclusion in the BCR are as follows:

- a. Payments received from the Dept. of Energy for damages relating to spent nuclear fuel disposal,
- b. Refunds due retail customers from regulated "Earnings Sharing" mechanisms,
- c. Proceeds from the sale of Company assets,
- d. Reductions of income tax or other tax obligations,
- e. Accounting or rate-making adjustments and/or corrections which result in a credit,
- f. Any other Bill Credit type approved by the Commission for inclusion.

(Continued on Sheet No. 5-94)

Date Filed: 05-05-22

By: Christopher B. Clark

Effective Date:

President, Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation

Case No. PU-22-

Order Date:

Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401

NORTH DAKOTA ELECTRIC RATE BOOK - NDPSO NO. 2

BILL CREDIT RIDER (Continued)

Section No. 5
Original Sheet No. 94

TRUE-UP

Generally, each type of Bill Credit being distributed to customers through the BCR will include a true-up provision, the terms of which will be defined in the specific proceeding in which the given Bill Credit was reviewed and approved by the Commission. The purpose of the true-up will be to ensure each Bill Credit has been fully distributed to customers as accurately as practicable. The true-up amounts calculated for each Bill Credit will be filed with the Commission with each corresponding BCR rate change petition.

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Date Filed: 05-05-22

By: Christopher B. Clark

Effective Date:

President, Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation

Case No. PU-22-

Order Date:

Non-Legislative

NORTH DAKOTA ELECTRIC RATE BOOK - NDPSO NO. 2

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 9th Revised Sheet No. 2

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(Continued on Sheet No. 1-3)

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| Case No. | PU-22- | | Order Date: |

NORTH DAKOTA ELECTRIC RATE BOOK – NDPSO NO. 2

RATE SCHEDULES
TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

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11th Revised Sheet No. TOC-2

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| 10. Bill Credit Rider | 5-93 |

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BILL CREDIT RIDER

Section No. 5
Original Sheet No. 93

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BILL CREDIT RIDER (BCR)

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DETERMINATION OF RATE

The development of a monthly BCR rate will reflect the summation of the specific rates determined for each type of qualifying Bill Credit being issued, based on the methodologies approved by the Commission within each of the applicable case proceedings. Unless otherwise prescribed, each Bill Credit obligation included in the BCR will first be assigned to customer class using the allocation methods approved in the most recent Class Cost of Service Study. The BCR rate for each customer class will reflect the summed rates of each type of active Bill Credit as well as any carryover balance (i.e., true-up) associated with each Bill Credit. The BCR rate for each class may be adjusted at any time during the year, depending on 1) when new Bill Credits are approved for inclusion, 2) when the designated true-up period begins for each Bill Credit, and/or 3) when there is a need for a correction or adjustment. Supporting computations for each change in the BCR rate will be filed with the Commission at least 45 days before the proposed effective date of the BCR rate change. The current BCR rate for each customer class can be found at the Company's website (xcelenergy.com).

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(Continued on Sheet No. 5-94)

Date Filed: 05-05-22

By: Christopher B. Clark

Effective Date:

President, Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation

Case No. PU-22-

Order Date:

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Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401

NORTH DAKOTA ELECTRIC RATE BOOK - NDPSO NO. 2

BILL CREDIT RIDER (Continued)

Section No. 5
Original Sheet No. 94

TRUE-UP

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