

April 27, 2022  
Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel  
P.O. Box 1301  
Saskatoon, SK S7K 3N1

**Subject: Review of the SaskPower 2022 and 2023 Rate Application**

To Whom it May Concern:

As you may know, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization representing the interests of over 95,000 small- and medium-sized businesses across Canada. On behalf of our 4,300 small business members in Saskatchewan, we appreciate the opportunity to express our concerns regarding SaskPower's proposal to significantly increase rates for the small commercial sector and farms in both 2022 and 2023.

The approval of these rate increases would come as yet another blow to Saskatchewan small businesses that are already struggling to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to [CFIB's latest Recovery Dashboard](#), only 42 per cent of Saskatchewan small businesses are making normal sales for this time of year, while the majority of business owners continue to struggle with pandemic-related debt and stress. Following two years of pandemic restrictions, declining revenues, and rising debt, businesses are now facing the cost pressures of soaring inflation, rising fuel costs, the carbon tax, increased Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance premiums and, as of July, the addition of the Saskatchewan small business corporate income tax. Small businesses simply cannot afford take on any additional cost burdens.

Higher electricity costs mean small businesses will have fewer resources to create jobs, invest in their businesses, and contribute to the growth of the provincial economy. Even under "normal" (pre-pandemic) conditions, low electricity rates are important to keep Saskatchewan businesses competitive in a global marketplace; however, we are nowhere near back to normal conditions. According to CFIB survey data from April 2022, "keeping up with government costs" is among the top two issues making it difficult for small businesses to get back on track, with 84 per cent of business owners identifying this as a major concern. If costs keep increasing without significant relief measures, Saskatchewan's small business climate will continue to suffer.

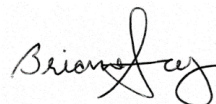
Instead of pursuing significant rate increases, we believe SaskPower should further its efforts to curb operating, maintenance, and administration (OM&A) spending and look for ways to forgo increases in OM&A expenses.

Thank you for considering the concerns of Saskatchewan small business owners. It is our hope that the Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel will limit electrical rate increases, and instead emphasize the need for SaskPower to continue reducing its costs.

Sincerely,



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