

January 13, 2026

Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel

400 - 2400 College Avenue
Regina, Saskatchewan, S4P 1C8
Via e-mail: feedback@saskratereview.ca

Subject: CFIB concerns regarding SaskPower's proposed electricity rate increases

Dear Members of the Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel:

On behalf of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) and our more than 2,000 small business members across Saskatchewan, we are writing to express concern with SaskPower's application for consecutive electricity rate increases of 3.9 per cent effective February 1, 2026, and a further 3.9 per cent effective February 1, 2027.

Small businesses, including our farm members, are already under significant financial pressure. They continue to contend with rising input costs, persistent labour shortages, and ongoing economic uncertainty. Electricity is not a discretionary expense, it is a core operating cost. Further increases, even when described as "modest," compound financial strain that many businesses simply cannot absorb.

CFIB is particularly concerned that the proposed February 1, 2026 increase would be implemented on an interim basis while the application remains under review. For small businesses and farms operating on tight margins, interim increases create immediate cost pressure and uncertainty, shifting financial risk onto ratepayers before the review process has concluded.

While SaskPower estimates the proposed increases would add approximately \$11 per month for a typical farm account, feedback from CFIB members suggests a far greater impact. For farms and small businesses using three-phase power for large buildings, equipment, and storage, the cumulative effect often amounts to hundreds of dollars per year, with costs effectively doubling once the second increase is implemented. Members are also concerned these increases will be further magnified by the application of provincial sales tax.

CFIB survey data consistently shows that energy and fuel costs are among the top cost constraints limiting small business growth. A majority of small business owners report they are unable to pass increased energy costs on to customers without losing competitiveness, leaving them no choice but

to absorb the costs directly. This further erodes already-thin margins and undermines business sustainability, particularly in rural and agricultural communities.

While the proposed increases have been publicly described as “modest,” they must be assessed cumulatively. Two consecutive 3.9 per cent increases represent a sustained escalation in electricity costs. For energy-intensive operations such as farms, food processors, and rural small businesses, these increases are neither isolated nor incremental, they compound existing pressures year over year.

These proposed increases are also occurring amid a broader affordability challenge facing Saskatchewan businesses. Small business owners are managing rising insurance premiums, higher occupancy and labour costs, and continued volatility in input prices. Electricity rate increases do not occur in isolation, and each additional cost reduces business resilience, limits reinvestment, and constrains job creation.

We recognize that SaskPower faces legitimate challenges in maintaining reliable service, upgrading aging infrastructure, and modernizing the provincial grid. However, CFIB believes these investments must be undertaken in a cost-effective and transparent manner that reflects customers’ ability to pay. Ratepayers, particularly farms and small businesses, must have confidence that increased costs are justified, clearly allocated, and delivering measurable value.

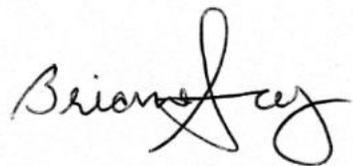
Small business owners are also calling for greater transparency regarding how revenues from proposed rate increases will be used, including clearer information on capital priorities, timelines, and cost controls. Too often, businesses feel decisions are effectively predetermined rather than being meaningfully engaged as partners in long-term planning.

Saskatchewan’s economic competitiveness depends heavily on the strength of its rural and agricultural economy. Electricity is a foundational input for modern farming and value-added production, and sustained cost increases risk undermining productivity and long-term competitiveness. Any rate-setting decision should carefully consider its impact on sectors with limited ability to reduce consumption or shift costs elsewhere.

CFIB urges the Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel to carefully consider the cumulative and long-term impact of these increases on small businesses and family farms, and to ensure any approved rate adjustments balance infrastructure needs with affordability, competitiveness, and economic sustainability.

Thank you for considering the concerns of Saskatchewan’s small business community. If you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact us at (306) 713-8071 or Brianna.Solberg@cfib.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brianna Solberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Brianna Solberg
Director, Legislative Affairs

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler Slobogian". The signature is more compact and stylized than the one to its left.

Tyler Slobogian
Senior Policy Analyst, Prairies & Northern Canada

Cc. The Hon. Jeremy Harrison, Minister Responsible for SaskPower