

MY TURN

'I am confident we can work together'

LUIS REYES

In the wake of the PRC hearing on the Kit Carson (KCEC) rate case, it has become painfully obvious to me that I personally need to do a better job of both active listening and effective communicating.

There was a great deal of testimony in particular about hardship cases and a feeling that people were being "punished" for effectively conserving power, though that is in no way intended.

The fact is, a lack of any infrastructure-cost rate increase over the last 25 years has led to a situation where power usage is greatly subsidizing the costs of lines, equipment, transformers, meters, maintenance and the like.

I recognize that a roughly \$10 per month increase is very large, especially in a tough economic climate. But please also consider more than about half that cost or more will be offset initially by a corresponding reduction in the current cost of power.

We really must end this practice of service costs being paid for by power. If we do not do so, the subsidy is going to further skew the already large imbalance and ultimately either force very high rates or return us to the days of less reliable service, or both.

A proper distribution of costs in our utility bills, by contrast, will prepare us for a future of greater distributed power sources — such as solar — while running an efficient operation that also maintains reliability.

While we have held a large number of meetings during this process, I am determined to do more to work with co-op members and to better explain the situation before us. Since we all want a sustainable, reliable co-op, I am confident we can work together through this process to a satisfactory and just conclusion.



Luis A. Reyes Jr. is chief executive officer of Kit Carson Electric Cooperative.