



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Slow Response by NYSEG Left Region In Dark During Weak Tropical Storm

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Albany, NY - On October 29, 2107, the fifth anniversary of Superstorm Sandy, a potentially devastating tropical storm tore through the Hudson Valley, producing high-speed winds, torrential rain, and hazardous flooding. Although tropical storm Philippe did not deliver as advertised, it left behind numerous snapped power lines and uprooted trees.

Residents and local officials in the Hudson Valley had prepared for a disaster on par with Sandy, but were spared a similar horrific experience. Judging by the poor response to the storm by New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG), they had barely prepared at all.

Several neighborhoods in Putnam and Westchester Counties experienced extended power outages. Calls for help to local officials substantiate that the outages lasted for more than 24 hours and there were energized power lines blocking roads and driveways for up to 48 hours.

In the aftermath of the storm, Senator Terrence Murphy, Assemblyman Kevin Byrne and Assemblyman David Buchwald wrote to John Rhodes, Chairman of the Public Service Commission, to convey their frustrations as well as those of their constituents, over how NYSEG had managed the situation. A similar letter from the Supervisors of Putnam County detailed NYSEG's mismanagement of the storm and identical accounts were reported from town supervisors along the I-684 corridor in Westchester County. In response, the Hudson Valley lawmakers requested a formal review of NYSEG's response to the storm.

"Weather reports warned of significant rainfall and wind, prompting residents to brace for the worst," said Senator Murphy. "These same reports should have triggered a similar response by NYSEG. This type of response by NYSEG for a weakened storm is simply unacceptable. There has to be a great deal of concern now about NYSEG's preparation and execution for future storms."

Assemblyman Byrne stated, "It's critical for representatives on both sides of the aisle to come together to alert state agencies when problems arise in the community and prevent them from happening again. That's what we are hoping to do here; to work together to find out where things went wrong and to make the proper adjustments before the next emergency."

"Our region does not lack for experience in dealing with major storms and power disruptions so it is disturbing that New York State Electric and Gas was so unable to respond to the October storm in a timely manner," said Assemblyman Buchwald. "We can't wait for NYSEG to get its act together; the Public Service Commission should agree to conduct a formal review of the company's inadequate storm response."

Tropical Storm Philippe left approximately 1.2 million customers in New England without electricity. NYSEG acknowledged on their website on October 30 that more than 55,000 were without power at least once during the storm