



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

## Community Update: Response to High Utility Bills, Bill Passing, Upcoming Events

SENATOR SHELLEY MAYER February 23, 2024

Dear Friends,

I hope you are healthy and well! I was fortunate to have all of our children and grandchildren (five!) visiting over President's Day Weekend so forgive my delay in getting out this newsletter. But there is much to report.

### **Terribly High Con Edison Bills**

Most importantly, I have heard from many constituents who are justifiably angry about the unacceptably high gas and electric bills from Con Ed that they have received this winter, and I share the outrage. I want to share with you some of the steps I am taking to address this crisis, as well as actions you can take.

[Join the Upcoming Webinar on Utility Costs](#): On Wednesday, March 6th, I am hosting a webinar, together with PULP and Sustainable Westchester, which will cover some of the policy changes we are working on in the Senate and also provide residents with information on lowering energy costs and exploring available financial assistance. Please join us; more information is below in the Upcoming Events section.

**Complain to the Public Service Commission:** File a complaint with the Department of Public Service/Public Service Commission (DPS/PSC) which regulates utilities in New York State. We must raise our voices together! You can do so online here: [Department of Public Service](#) or by calling 800-342-3377.

Support My Bill to Limit the “Return on Equity” in PSC calculation of rates: Unfortunately, most utility companies have routinely received rate increase after rate increase, constrained only by the Public Service Commission’s willingness to rein in those increases. I **have repeatedly opposed these requests** and will continue to do so. In the meantime, I have proposed major legislation to rein in utility costs:

- **S6557A:** My bill would limit the “return on equity,” or ROE, of the utilities that the PSC regulates. If passed and signed, this would translate into lower bills from Con Edison for ratepayers across the district. This bill passed the Senate last year, but not the Assembly. I’m fighting to pass it again this year and we need your help!
- I also co-sponsor the NY HEAT ACT, **S2016B**, sponsored by my colleague Senator Liz Krueger, which would ensure that no residential customer pays more than 6% of their household income on energy bills. It would also require the PSC to develop a plan for implementing the 6% cap.

Call the Governor’s office: I encourage you to call the Governor’s office at 1-518-474-8390 as well as DPS/PSC to complain about these outrageous bills.

In the meantime, Public Utility Law Project (PULP) offers assistance to New York consumers faced with high energy costs, and can direct you to available resources and/or advocate on your behalf with the utility company. You can find them here: [Public Utility Law Project](#).

I know these actions do not provide the relief you need right now. But I am using all the tools at my disposal to fight against these rate increases that make the basic necessities of life unaffordable to many of my constituents. I will continue to do so.

### **Proposed School Aid Cuts in Governor's Executive Budget**

I strongly oppose the Governor's school aid cuts, which impact every district in the State and result in actual cuts to over half the districts in Westchester, and am doing everything in my power to have the funds owed restored in the final budget. As Chair of the Senate Education Committee, this is my number one priority in the budget negotiations. Please join my efforts by calling the Governor at 1-518-474-8390 to express your views.

As always, I appreciate your input, emails and suggestions. We are truly fortunate to represent such a diverse, dynamic community.

If there is anything my office can assist you with, please email me at [smayer@nysenate.gov](mailto:smayer@nysenate.gov) or call (914) 934-5250.

Warm regards,

Shelley B. Mayer

State Senator

37th District

Read the full Community Update [here](#).