

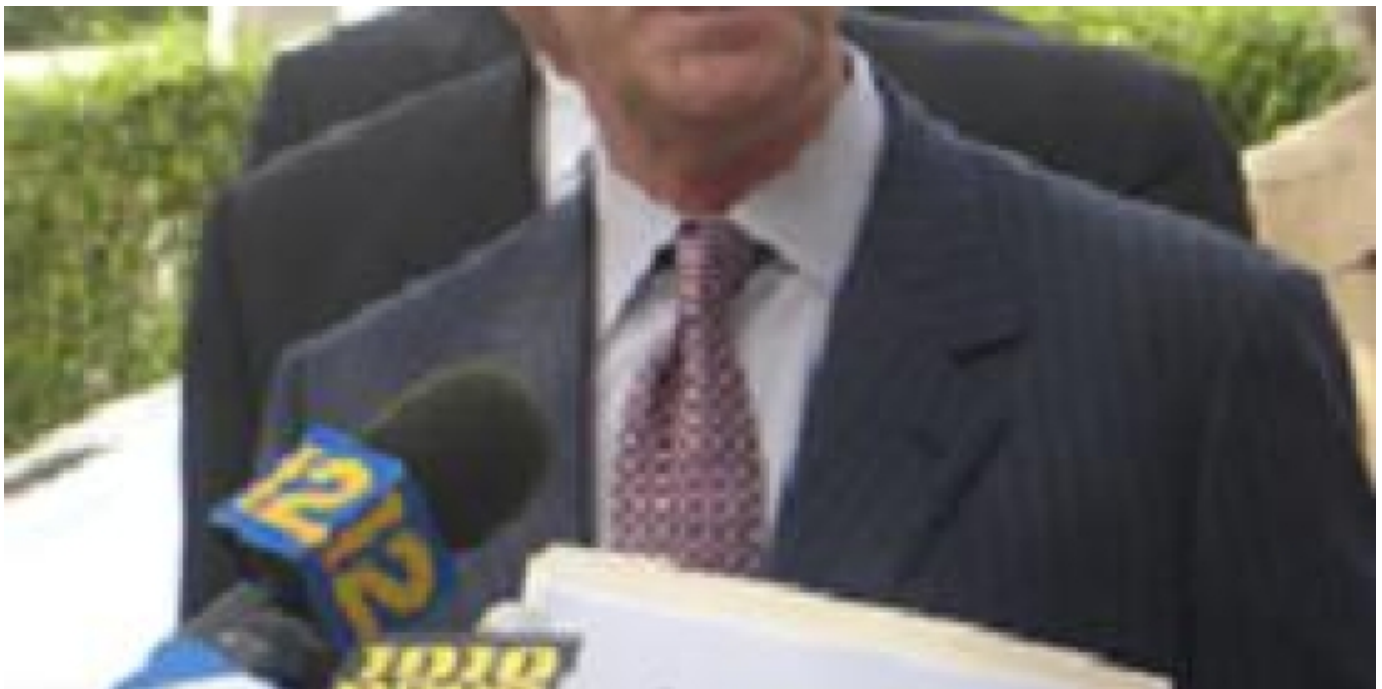


NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## Senator Jeff Klein Blasts Inadequate Response To Latest Con Edison Power Outage

JEFFREY D. KLEIN September 5, 2006



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Klein would also like to see an investigation by the state to determine if future damage from such storms can be lessened with better routine maintenance of power lines and tree branches. Sunday's storm produced driving rain and wind gusts of up to 50 MPH, but the extent of damage was still surprising since the system was no longer even a tropical storm by the time it reached our area.

While clearing hundreds of downed trees and power lines is dangerous and time-consuming work, Klein faults a continuing lack of diligence and overall poor communication from electricity provider Con Edison. Many customers have complained to Klein's office that they are not receiving accurate and useful information about when they can expect their power restored.

Klein is also proposing new legislation that will better protect utility customers in the event of an extended power outage. State regulations already require service providers to address service complaints fully and promptly, with ordinary out-of-service troubles not requiring unusual repairs to be remedied within 24 hours, excluding Sundays and holidays. They also require service providers to make every effort during a major service outage to inform the general public of the details of the outage, including the areas affected and a schedule for expected service renewal, but there is no penalty for non-compliance. Klein's legislation would allow the state to sanction providers who fail to make diligent efforts towards restoration of service or reasonable efforts to communicate with their customers during and emergency by requiring the provider to provide rebates of up to \$250 per customer to compensate for food spoilage and other outage-related expenses.

County without power for up to five days, Con Edison promised to provide more accurate estimated restoration times, more frequent briefings for public officials and closer coordination with municipal officials, highway departments and emergency response units. The New York State Department of Public Service also recommended much more frequent communication with both government officials and members of the public.

Adding to the frustration is the knowledge that all of the 100,000 affected customers of the Long Island Power Authority have already had their power restored. Further down the coast, about 90 percent of the nearly 200,000 customers of the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company who lost power in the storm had service restored within 48 hours, with the final

1,000 restored on Monday.

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