



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Senator Murphy & Senator Serino Call for Hearing on Storm Response

TERRENCE MURPHY March 6, 2018

| ISSUE: **STORM RESPONSE, STORM RESILIENCY, STORMS, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**



Albany, NY - Residents across the Hudson Valley, and in particular the counties of Dutchess, Putnam and Westchester, have been without power since Friday afternoon due to what utility companies are calling the worst incident since Superstorm Sandy hit. New York State Senator Terrence Murphy, Chairman of the State Senate's Committee on Investigations and Government Operations, is calling for a hearing to examine the storm preparedness and response by regional utility companies.

Senator Murphy said, "Here in the Hudson Valley we have experienced multiple blackouts over the past few months, winter price hikes and now a subpar performance in response to this latest storm. Residents and our partners in government are beyond frustrated with the poor performance and deserve answers as to what steps were taken in preparation and what needs to be done in the future."

"In the aftermath of the storm, I traveled to Putnam County to see first-hand the recovery efforts that were underway," said Senator Sue Serino. "It was clear to me that our local municipalities and the county were working tirelessly get the cleanup underway to meet the needs of residents who were without power, but there seemed to be an absolute disconnect when it came to the utility company's role. Any delay in recovery is costing our municipalities significantly and the people of the Hudson Valley deserve answers. Today, I join my colleagues in calling for a hearing to garner a clear picture of what went wrong and where we can do better to ensure that local residents are kept safe and have services they can depend on."

At the high points of the outage an estimated 90% of customers were without power in the town of Somers. In Yorktown that number exceeded 80% as well as in the town of Carmel.

Town of Somers Supervisor Rick Morrissey stated, "A public utility has a fiduciary duty to provide services to its customers. NYSEG continues to release misinformation and fail in its responsibility to local ratepayers. I look forward to testifying about the inadequate response in Somers and to hold whoever necessary accountable."

Town of Carmel Supervisor Ken Schmitt added, "NYSEG's response was horrible. This was poorly planned and executed by management. We deserve results and must see the numbers are coming down. I look forward to voicing the dissatisfaction of Carmel's residents at the appropriate time."

Town of North Salem Supervisor Warren Lucas said, "We have already filed a formal complaint with the Public Service Commission from an episode in January. Action from New York State is critical and we look forward to Senator Murphy and Senator Serino uniting the communities of our region in an effort to get the answers we deserve."

New Castle Town Supervisor Rob Greenstein stated "Con Ed dropped the ball, once again. I can understand that they had crews in Puerto Rico but they waited too long to ask for mutual aid. They knew the storm was coming. We all did. We are outraged by their delayed response. I look forward to working with Senator Murphy to hold Con Ed accountable and make sure this never happens again. Our residents and Con Ed customers deserve nothing less."

Town of Pawling Supervisor James Schmitt said, "People deserve answers. The coordination between the utilities and municipalities must improve in order to provide the basic services our residents expect to have. Enough is enough."

The impacted area is bracing for another major winter event this week. Snowfall is expected to range from 8-12 inches with many customers hoping the power will be returned before the snowflakes start falling. Details of the hearing will be announced once cleanup and full restoration have been completed.