



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Skoufis

## Skoufis Strikes Agreement with Utility and Service Providers to Address Zombie Poles

SENATOR JAMES SKOUFIS December 3, 2019

| ISSUE: **UTILITIES, SERVICE PROVIDERS, NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\***

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Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley) has established an agreement with utility and service provider companies in the Hudson Valley to ensure that they remediate zombie poles, also known as double poles. In the fall, Skoufis sent letters to the area's utility companies requesting a plan be immediately submitted to his office to remove all pending zombie poles within the Senate District or else face legal action for their neglect. Every utility company complied.

Under the New York State Public Service Commission's (PSC) pole attachment policy, utility and service providers must complete a pole transfer within 30-days. Oftentimes, companies won't move their service lines from the old pole to the new one as a cost-saving measure, resulting in a delay of the old pole being removed; in some cases, wires would sit on old poles for years, resulting in long-delayed removal of the poles themselves. Not only are these poles

disruptive to the Hudson Valley's natural beauty, but these poles can also be a threat to public safety when they are left unattended for long periods of time, especially after dangerous weather.

In September of this year, Skoufis, as Chairman of the investigations committee, sent letters to over a dozen service and utility providers in the 39th Senate District, demanding that they immediately develop a detailed remediation plan that will result in the full resolution of their outstanding double pole obligations, under threat of legal action.

"I have been leading a local effort to push companies to remove these temporary poles because I can't sit by and watch while the Hudson Valley's irreplaceable environment becomes blighted by zombie poles," **said Senator Skoufis**. "Now, in my new role as Chairman of the investigations committee, I'm glad that we are moving forward with a concrete plan to remove double poles and finally clean up our communities. I thank all of the utilities companies that have complied and committed to removing these blights from our villages, towns, and cities."

Senator Skoufis' investigative efforts have been successful in establishing agreements. For example, the Committee identified 157 poles Central Hudson was responsible for removing within the Senate District; in working with the Committee since September, Central Hudson was able to identify backlogs and inconsistencies and has committed to removing these double poles as expeditiously as possible. As of date, Central Hudson has 15 double poles left to schedule for removal.

**Cornwall Town Supervisor Richard Randazzo said,** “I am very pleased Senator Skoufis is addressing the problem with the utility companies. The poles are a hazard and environmentally a problem. Central Hudson has made progress in Cornwall with removal of the double poles and it makes a big difference in our community.”

Frontier Communications, one of the region’s providers for Internet, television, and phone services, has 771 zombie pole wires across the Senate District. Frontier has committed to addressing all of the poles by this spring; Skoufis and his Committee are monitoring Frontier’s progress and will take any necessary steps to ensure compliance with their mutual agreement.

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