



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Todd Kaminsky

Kaminsky and Thiele Introduce Bill to Mandate Disclosure of Utility Executive Salaries

TODD KAMINSKY August 25, 2020

(Albany, New York) – Today, Senator Todd Kaminsky and Assemblymember Thiele introduced legislation (S8937) mandating that utilities release details of executive compensation and the salaries of all employees making \$125,000 or more each year. Tropical Storm Isaias hit the New York area on August 4, 2020, leaving more than 300,000 Long Islanders without power, cable or internet for days. PSEG-LI, the local electric provider, has agreed to reimburse customers for spoiled food or medication if their power was off for 72 hours or more, however, this funding is to come from rate-payers, not from the profits of the utility or its executives.

“Sunlight is the best disinfectant, and ratepayers deserve to know how much of their hard-earned money is going to public utility executives,” **said Senator Todd Kaminsky.** “After Tropical Storm Isaias, it is clear that a substantial sum of our utility rates are being used to enrich senior utility staffers instead of going toward infrastructure, planning and communication improvements. Further, these executives have reaped the benefit of millions of dollars in bonuses in recent years, and it is they, or their shareholders, who should fund customer reimbursements, not ratepayers.”

Assemblyman Thiele stated, “PSEG-LI is a contractor for a public authority (LIPA) that has as its mission the supplying of a most basic societal need: electricity. Its revenue is generated by the payment of the monthly electric bill of every Long Island resident and business. As was just the case with Tropical Storm Isais, we have seen time and time again the breakdown in communication, and the failure of the utility to function as it should and supply all Long Islanders with power. At the same time, the pockets of PSEG-LI Executives continue to grow on the backs of ratepayers. The people's right to review PSEG-LI’s executive compensation information should be obvious in a democratic society. Access to such information should not be thwarted by shrouding it with the cloak of secrecy or confidentiality. I am proud to sponsor this legislation with Senator Kaminsky to increase transparency by providing public oversight of salaries, as is already required of LIPA.”

At the August 20, 2020, New York State Joint Legislative hearing into the response from Tropical Storm Isaias, Senator Kaminsky questioned PSEG-LI executives about their compensation packages - questions that they refused to answer. Under Senator Kaminsky’s bill, utilities would be required to post the names, titles and salaries of their executives on their websites, including the proportion of executives’ salaries that are paid by ratepayers. Additionally, the measure would also require utilities to publicly post the names, titles and salaries of employees who make \$125,000 or more each.

New Yorkers depend on utilities to provide essential services like electricity, water, and telecommunication. Even with regulatory oversight over rates, these large corporations reap large profits, yet so many provide inadequate service, as was seen with Tropical Storm Isaias. Since ratepayers finance utility companies, it is only fair for them to know how their money is being spent, including how much is being used to compensate executives.

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