



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

## Senator Hinchey Announces Legislation to Protect New Yorkers from Unfair Utility Billing Practices

MICHELLE HINCHEY December 14, 2021



**KINGSTON, NY** – State Senator Michelle Hinchey (SD-46) [today announced](#) new legislation ([S.7579](#)) to protect New Yorkers from excessive month-to-month fluctuations in their utility bills due to the use of estimated billing practices by utility providers. Many residents in Hinchey’s district have seen their bills increase hundreds of dollars because of estimated utility readings, which is when a gas or electricity supplier predicts the amount of power a customer would have used that month based on their past usage, a process that frequently leads to customers being overcharged. Hinchey’s bill aims to curb this billing method, which has placed significant hardship on lower-income residents in her district.

The legislation authored by Hinchey would require the Public Service Commission (PSC) to develop a best practices estimation formula that can be used as a utility industry standard in New York State while limiting the number of times an estimated billing formula can be used to three billing cycles per year (down from six). Hinchey’s bill sets the deadline to November 1, 2022, for the PSC to create the new billing standard, which will be informed, in part, by a comprehensive

review of the estimated billing procedures used by all utility corporations serving New York State.

“If you’re a single parent or a senior on a fixed income, you should never have to choose between putting food on the table or keeping the heat on just because your utility company decided to overestimate your utility bill by hundreds of dollars more than expected that month. That’s exactly what’s happening to residents in my district, and I’ve introduced a bill to protect all New Yorkers from these unacceptable billing practices,” **said Senator Michelle Hinchey**. “Utility corporations should be able to accurately bill customers instead of relying on estimations which are based on little more than a guess. This practice is incredibly unfair to customers and has a particularly negative impact on lower-income New Yorkers who need to be able to adequately budget each month to meet their basic needs. My bill cracks down on utilities by limiting their ability to use estimated billing procedures and tasking the PSC with developing a new industry standard that brings fairness to this practice. I urge all residents of SD-46 to call my office at 845-331-3810 if they’ve had this experience with a utility provider so that we can advocate on their behalf. I look forward to fighting for the passage of this bill to bring more equity and fairness to the utility industry.”

*Senator Michelle Hinchey represents the 46th Senate District, which includes Greene and Montgomery Counties and parts of Albany, Schenectady, and Ulster Counties. Senator Hinchey serves as Chair of the Agriculture Committee and sits on the Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business, Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Energy and Telecommunications, Environmental Conservation, and Local Government Committees.*

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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## 2021-S7579

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly

- On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Permits the rendering of an estimated bill from a utility corporation or municipality under certain circumstances

December 08, 2021

In Senate Committee [Energy and Telecommunications](#)

Sponsored by [Michelle Hinchey](#)

Do you support this bill?