



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Walczyk

Senator Walczyk Calls for Full Health Assessment of Firefighters From Chaumont Battery Explosion

MARK WALCZYK August 28, 2023

| ISSUE: **SOLAR FACILITIES, LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES**



After the battery explosion in Chaumont, Governor Kathy Hochul announced the creation of an “Inter-Agency Fire Safety Working Group”. This group was charged with working with first responders and local leaders to address potential risks and best practices to emergencies at energy storage sites across the State. The release sent out by the Governor one month ago stated that the working group would “mobilize the personnel and resources necessary to keep New Yorkers safe.”

Senator Walczyk is calling on the Governor to make good on her word. As of today, no state agency or member of the working group has contacted the Chaumont Fire Department regarding the well-being of the volunteers who were on scene. There have been no check ups on the volunteers to see if anyone is experiencing symptoms or lasting effects of the incident. There have also been no blood tests to document any traces of hydro-fluoride exposure to the volunteers who spent time on scene.

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"We all know that thermal runaway in a battery explosion produces potentially deadly gasses that cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. The Governor vowed to keep New Yorkers safe from these conditions, yet volunteers were exposed to these gasses for days and no support has been given from the State," said Senator Walczyk. "I'm calling on the Governor to release resources to ensure the volunteers safety and to announce a timeline for the findings of her Inter-Agency Fire Safety Task Force. It's the least we can do to provide the necessary support to those who kept us safe from the State funded battery explosion."

Senator Mark Walczyk represents the 49th Senate District, which includes the entire counties of Jefferson, Lewis, Hamilton and Fulton. As well as parts of Oswego, St. Lawrence, and Herkimer counties. Sign up for exclusive updates from the Senator via his weekly newsletter by clicking [HERE](#) or by emailing walczyk@nysenate.gov.