



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

Senator Nozzolio Opposes NYSEG and RG&E Rate Increases

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO October 2, 2009

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New York State Senator Michael Nozzolio announced today that he has called upon the Public Service Commission to deny any increase in rates for New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) and Rochester Gas and Electric (RG&E). Last week, NYSEG and RG&E requested the Public Service Commission to approve substantial rate increases that would become effective as early as August 2010.

Under the proposal, the average RG&E residential electricity bill would go up by \$11.86 a month, or 16.1 percent, while the monthly gas bill would increase \$21.03, or 15.2 percent. NYSEG increases would be \$12.39, or 18.6 percent, for electricity and \$25.34, or 17.4 percent, for natural gas. "These rate increases are simply unacceptable," said Senator Nozzolio, "Our residents already pay some of the highest utility rates in the country and the Public Service Commission cannot possibly allow these companies to continue to increase their rates."

The proposed rate increases are expected to cost the average household approximately \$450 in the first year. Senator Nozzolio has contacted Public Service Commissioner Gary Brown to implore the agency to reject any proposal by NYSEG and RG&E to raise rates. In his letter to the Commissioner, Senator Nozzolio wrote, "In these tough economic times, many of my constituents are already struggling to pay their gas and electric bills. It is unconscionable to ask homeowners and businesses to pay higher costs for their gas and electric service."

The 2009-2010 New York State budget, which Senator Nozzolio adamantly opposed, already included a 2% tax on energy costs across the State. The 2% assessment has forced several Upstate businesses to cut their workforces and scale back operations while others have had to close their doors permanently. Senator Nozzolio believes another energy rate increase will continue to drive out private sector jobs. “This rate increase would devastate our already fragile manufacturing sector in Upstate New York. A rate increase of this magnitude would simply be the last straw for countless businesses and residents,” said Senator Nozzolio.

“It is vital that we do not allow the Public Service Commission to approve these rate increases. Our residents already shoulder incredibly high energy costs and an unbearable tax structure. The residents of Upstate New York have spoken loudly and clearly, and the answer is ‘NO’,” concluded Senator Nozzolio.