



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

Senator Metzger Calls Proposed NYSEG Rate Increase Unacceptable

JEN METZGER January 2, 2020

| ISSUE: **NYSEG, RATE INCREASE, METZGER, SULLIVAN COUNTY**

Liberty, NY...Senator Jen Metzger this week submitted comments to the New York State Public Service Commissioner as part of the Commission's ongoing proceeding to review the proposed rate plan of New York State Electric and Gas Corporation (NYSEG), which provides electric service to many communities in her district. The evidentiary hearing for the proceeding has been scheduled for February 3, 2020. (A copy of the Senator's comments is available [here](#).)

Senator Metzger opposes the proposed rate increase, stating that “NYSEG's proposed delivery rate increase of 23 percent—adding an average of \$10.20 to monthly customer bills—would place an unreasonable burden on my constituents, is entirely unacceptable, and must be rejected.” She took issue with the utility's requested increase in its rate of profit to 9.5 percent, which was one of the greatest contributors to the rate increase.

Senator Metzger also criticized the utility for a poor track record of service reliability, stating that “NYSEG has consistently under-invested in preventative maintenance for reliability, which worsened the severity of impacts of the March 2018 winter storms and has also

contributed to a high frequency of power outages in my Senate district more generally.” She urged the Commission “to ensure that proposed changes to [the utility’s] vegetation management plan prioritize circuits in the Catskills region, which has suffered an inordinate number of power outages,” and called for greater investment in the distribution system to improve reliability. NYSEG’s poor response to the March 2018 winter storms resulted in a recent \$9 million settlement with the State, and Senator Metzger urged the Commission to use those funds to help communities most impacted by outages to become more resilient, including through investments in microgrids for critical infrastructure and back-up generation combining storage with renewable energy.

Senator Metzger strongly urged the Commission to ensure that the approved rate plan supports the goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), passed by the State Legislature and signed into law in 2019. “With targets of achieving a carbon-free electricity system by 2040...and net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, NYSEG must adopt programs and rate designs aligned with these targets now and not delay until the next rate plan.” Metzger’s comments address several related issues, including expanded electric vehicle infrastructure and programs to encourage renewable heating and cooling.

In her comments, Senator Metzger also:

- Opposed the closure of NYSEG’s walk-in office in Liberty, in Sullivan County, which she argues will disproportionately affect elderly and low-income customers.
- Called for the creation of a new performance-based mechanism that would penalize the utility for failing to interconnect to new businesses in a timely fashion. According to Sullivan County, interconnection delays have been an obstacle to economic development.

- Called for a reduction in the fixed monthly customer charge by 20 percent and opposed a new monthly charge of nearly \$20 for customers who wish to opt out of smart meters.