

1 10-7-2021 - Monthly Meeting

2 STATE OF NEW YORK

3 PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

4 MONTHLY MEETING

5  
6 Thursday, October 7, 2021

7 10:31 a.m. until 12:02 p.m.

8 ESP, Building 3, 19th Floor Boardroom

9 Albany, New York

10

11 COMMISSIONERS:

12 RORY M. CHRISTIAN, Chair

13 DIANE X. BURMAN

14 TRACEY A. EDWARDS

15 JAMES S. ALESI

16 JOHN B. MAGGIORE

17 DAVID J. VALESKY

18 JOHN B. HOWARD

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2 (The hearing commenced at 10:31 a.m.)

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Okay. Good  
4 morning, everyone. So we'll begin the webcast in  
5 about 10 seconds.

6 Good morning. I call the session of  
7 the Public Service Commission to order. Secretary  
8 Phillips, are there any changes to the final agenda?

9 SECRETARY PHILLIPS: There are no  
10 changes to the final agenda. May I just take a  
11 moment to remind everyone though, please use your  
12 microphones when you speak. Make sure the green  
13 light is on. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you. First  
15 I'd like to conduct a roll call of the Commissioners.  
16 When I call your name, please confirm that you are  
17 with us. Commissioner Diane Burman?

18 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: Here.

19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner  
20 James Alesi?

21 COMMISSIONER ALESI: Here.

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner  
23 Tracey Edwards?

24 COMMISSIONER EDWARDS: Here.

25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner John

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2 Howard?

3 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Here.

4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner

5 David Valesky?

6 COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Here.

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner

8 John Maggiore?

9 COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Here.

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you. We  
11 have a quorum. But before we move to the regular  
12 agenda, I will ask Kevin Wisely, Director of the  
13 Office of Resiliency and Emergency Preparedness to  
14 provide an update on the impact and restoration  
15 related to Hurricane Ida.

16 MR. WISELY: Good morning, Chair  
17 Christian and Commissioners. As you are all aware,  
18 New York State in particular our downstate regions  
19 were severely impacted by the remnants of Hurricane  
20 and then Tropical Storm Ida, beginning the early  
21 morning hours of Thursday, 2 September 2021.

22 Ida produced intense rain and flooding  
23 which cause power outages, downed trees, flash  
24 flooding and significant damage to public and private  
25 property in the impacted areas.

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2 More than 7 inches of rain fell in  
3 some parts of New York City and a record setting 3.15  
4 inches fell in our -- in one hour in Central Park.

5 Unfortunately, this severe and tragic  
6 weather event also led to at least 13 individuals  
7 losing their lives in New York City, along with three  
8 in Westchester County.

9 D.P.S. begins tracking various  
10 forecasts to understand possible utility exposure  
11 prior to weather events reaching New York State.  
12 DPS's Office of Resilience and Emergency Preparedness  
13 assesses the likelihood of an event to affect the  
14 State and prepares internal correspondence for those  
15 weather events that may cause or issues to utility  
16 infrastructure.

17 As confidence grows of the storm's  
18 impact, the correspondence provides greater details.  
19 New York State utilities are also tracking weather  
20 forecasts and making preparations -- decisions based  
21 on the forecast, and internal modeling, and previous  
22 experience.

23 D.P.S. communicates regularly with  
24 utilities prior to a weather system impacting New  
25 York State to ensure preparedness is underway, pre-

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2 incident classifications are being discussed and  
3 assigned, and as necessary, appropriate external  
4 staffing is being secured prior to impact.

5 Preparations for the remnants of  
6 Hurricane Ida included effective communications  
7 internally and with utilities, appropriate utili --  
8 utility incident classification, and establishment of  
9 utility incident command structures, and appropriate  
10 internal and external staffing for utility  
11 infrastructure impacts.

12 The various utilities also coordinated  
13 effectively prior to and following the storm which  
14 aided in repair and restoration efforts. Municipal  
15 officials were kept abreast of pre-event forecast and  
16 preparedness and kept aware of status, repair, and  
17 restoration efforts throughout the event.

18 As a result of the Ida remnants,  
19 approximately 90,000 electric customers were impacted  
20 over the course of the storm event with a peak of  
21 52,000 outages during the early morning hours of  
22 Thursday, 2, September.

23 The intense and severe nature of the  
24 rainfall caused numerous flooding issues throughout  
25 the Westchester County and the New York City areas.

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2 Multiple public safety answering poise  
3 -- points in Westchester County also experienced  
4 flooding causing issues with their telecommunications  
5 equipment.

6 Verizon was able to quickly reroute  
7 incoming local 911 calls to predesignated backup  
8 sites so that no calls were lost. Overall, the  
9 utilities responded, repaired, and restored customers  
10 as quickly and safely as possible with the damage and  
11 flooding conditions that were incurred.

12 The utilities had the appropriate  
13 staffing secured and in service prior to storm  
14 impacts. National Grid was able to support P.S.E.G.  
15 Long Island, Con Edison and Central Hudson with  
16 mutual assistance resources.

17 Con Edison also secured additional  
18 local mutual -- mutual assistance to expedite  
19 restoration efforts based on damage assessment  
20 findings. Once NYSEG had prepared and restored  
21 customers in their service territory, they also  
22 provided Con Edison with additional mutual assistance  
23 resources.

24 Each utility also coordinated  
25 activities with the telecommunications and internet

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2           companies to enable us -- its safe repair. Utility  
3           gas operations were similarly prepared as the  
4           electric side and responding quickly to areas that  
5           needed to be isolated due to flooding while working  
6           closely with municipal officials.

7                    It should be noted the severity of the  
8           flooding led to numerous properties requiring repairs  
9           to internal electric and gas equipment and  
10          appliances, and occu -- occupancy habitability review  
11          by local code enforcement officials prior to being  
12          reconnected by the utilities.

13                   For safety reasons homeowners with  
14          flooded properties were required to secure  
15          electricians and/or plumbers to properly repair  
16          internal equipment and replace or repair appliances  
17          prior to being reconnected.

18                   Additionally, many homes and  
19          businesses then needed to be cleared for occupancy by  
20          the local code enforcement authority prior to the  
21          utilities ability to restore services safely and  
22          securely.

23                   While this may be frustrating times  
24          for customers, it ensures safety in the short and  
25          long term. Of the 125 National Grid Gas customers

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2            disconnected due to flooding in the New York City  
3            Boroughs of Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island, 82  
4            remain disconnected due to the severity of the  
5            impacts to their property.

6                    Additionally, of the 222 Con Edison  
7            gas customers disconnected due to the flooding in  
8            Westchester, the Bronx, and Queens, 106 remain  
9            disconnected due to the severity of the impacts to  
10           their property.

11                    Additionally, there were 61 electric  
12            services that remain disconnected due to occupancy  
13            flood damage, all within Westchester County. Both  
14            utilities are prepared to respond quickly when  
15            customers contact them that all repairs and  
16            inspections are finalized.

17                    While there were positive performances  
18            following this unique event, Ida did point out areas  
19            of improvement. Utility identification of  
20            infrastructure vulnerabilities and development of  
21            future resiliency projects are key to enhance their  
22            ability to maintain safe, reliable, and secure  
23            services during emergent impacts to critical  
24            infrastructure.

25                    Due to the severe and intense nature,

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2           as well as the overall volume of potential rainfall  
3           events, utilities must consider additional resiliency  
4           improvements to system design, including such  
5           projects as substation location considerations, for  
6           areas prone to flooding beyond that of just the  
7           coastal, and river, creek impacts incurred during  
8           storms such as Superstorm Sandy, and Tropical Storms  
9           Lee and Irene.

10                               Storm events such as Ida highlight the  
11           fact that municipal stormwater drainage systems and  
12           infrastructure must be enhanced also to handle larger  
13           volumes of rainfall over shorter periods of time to  
14           alleviate potential consequences of the increasing  
15           magnitude of severe weather.

16                               Utilities need to work in parallel  
17           with these entities to truly harden their systems.  
18           Climate chan -- change will continue to impact  
19           weather extremes and intensity beyond tropical  
20           cyclones, coastal storm surge, nor'easters, et cetera  
21           and bring increasing rain volume over short  
22           durations, increasing snow totals, stronger winds,  
23           all during what in the past, we would have been  
24           routine or severe weather systems.

25                               With those types of storms in mind,

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2 utilities must continually reassess infrastructure  
3 vulnerabilities across the entirety of their service  
4 territories, determine appropriate resiliency  
5 projects to mitigate potential weather risks, and  
6 make their infrastructure more adaptable to weather  
7 extremes.

8 Thank you for the opportunity to  
9 present this short briefing. I'm available for any  
10 questions.

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you, Mr.  
12 Wisely. Do any of the Commissioners have any  
13 questions or comments? Commissioner Burman?

14 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Yeah, just one  
15 issue that we know resiliency spending is something  
16 that we have great challenge going forward. And  
17 you'll probably hear this a couple of times today  
18 that the need for the Federal Government to help  
19 states meet this enormous infrastructure task is more  
20 evident than ever, and particularly the  
21 interrelationship between municipal -- as Kevin  
22 indicated municipal systems and private utility  
23 systems.

24 This will be the tens, if not hundreds  
25 of billions of dollars' worth of investment needed to

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2 truly harden our system. And again, I would hope  
3 that the Congress and the Administration would come  
4 through with this much needed money. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner --  
6 Commissioner Alesi?

7 COMMISSIONER ALESI: Nothing here.

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner  
9 Edwards.

10 COMMISSIONER EDWARDS: No comments.  
11 Thank you. Thank you, Kevin.

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner  
13 Valesky?

14 COMMISSIONER VALESKY: No questions.  
15 Thanks, Kevin, for the update.

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner  
17 Maggiore?

18 COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: I have no  
19 questions. But again, thank you, Kevin.

20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you again,  
21 Mr. Wisley.

22 MR. WISELY: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Okay. We'll now  
24 move to the regular agenda. The first item is Item  
25 201, Case 21-M-0243 as it relates to the report on

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2 electric and gas supply readiness for the upcoming  
3 winter.

4 This will be presented by Tammy  
5 Mitchell, Director, Office of Electric Gas and Water.  
6 Davide Maioriello, Utility Engineering Specialist  
7 III. Richard Quimby, Power Systems Operation  
8 Specialist IV. Paul Darmetko, Utility Supervisor and  
9 Anna Senatore, Utility Consumer Program Specialist.

10 In addition, we also have Cindy  
11 McCarran, Deputy Director of Safety and Reliability,  
12 Chris Stolicky, Utility Supervisor and Erin O'Dell  
13 Keller, Chief Call Center Outreach and Education, who  
14 are available for questions by phone. Tammy, please  
15 begin.

16 MS. MITCHELL: Good morning, Chair  
17 Christian, and Commissioners. Today Staff will be  
18 briefing you on the results of our investigation into  
19 the readiness of the State's natural gas and electric  
20 utilities for the coming winter.

21 Staff has been providing this annual  
22 briefing to the Commission prior to the winter season  
23 for many years. Previously, the briefing mainly  
24 focused on the State's natural gas utilities  
25 readiness to serve the projected demand of its

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2           customers for the upcoming winter months, as well as  
3           projected natural gas prices.

4                   Following the polar vortex, which was  
5           a period of prolonged cold weather during the 2013-  
6           2014 winter, we added to the presentation a  
7           discussion of the electric system primarily related  
8           to projected available resources and electric  
9           generator preparedness as well as a look at expected  
10          electric prices.

11                   This year we will also touch briefly  
12          on the status of the department's generic gas  
13          planning proceeding, but I note that the focus of  
14          today's presentation is the status of the natural gas  
15          system as it relates to serving cut -- customers this  
16          upcoming winter.

17                   By way of background, I'd like to  
18          provide a little history on natural gas prices in New  
19          York State. Before the development of the Marcellus  
20          Shale plate in Pennsylvania and West Virginia in  
21          2009, natural gas prices were very volatile and  
22          tracked closely with oil prices, which tend to be  
23          volatile since they are determined in international  
24          markets.

25                   Gas production closer to New York had

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2 the result of decoupling gas prices from oil prices  
3 and dropping natural gas prices in New York State  
4 compared to prices in Texas and Louisiana, which is  
5 where the majority of New York's natural gas came  
6 from prior to 2009.

7 As you will see later in the  
8 presentation, natural gas prices have remained  
9 relatively low and stable over the past decade due to  
10 various factors which will be covered shortly.

11 Gas supply or wholesale commodity  
12 prices are projected to increase significantly this  
13 winter compared to last winter. These increased  
14 supply prices are not unique to New York State, but  
15 are in fact being experienced nationally and globally  
16 as the economy begins to recover and demand for  
17 natural gas increases after a pandemic low level.

18 The price of natural gas in the United  
19 States has more than doubled since this time last  
20 year and is at a level not seen since 2014. And in  
21 Europe and Asia, wholesale prices are more than five  
22 times what they were a year ago.

23 While utility delivery rates have  
24 remained relatively stable compared to expected  
25 increases in supply prices, the surging supply prices

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2 will result in higher gas bills for customers this  
3 winter.

4 While gas heating bills will be higher  
5 this winter compared to last, overall bills will be  
6 in line with the average bills over the past decade  
7 and lower than heating bills experienced in the early  
8 2000s.

9 It should be noted that pipelines  
10 serving New York State are constrained, so it is  
11 important to ensure that gas utility growth does not  
12 outstrip available resources. With the advent of our  
13 efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the role  
14 of energy efficiency, demand response, and  
15 electrification of heating will grow in importance,  
16 and Staff will continue to brief you on the  
17 transition of the natural gas industry.

18 Additionally, as you are aware, there  
19 is an interdependency between the electric and gas  
20 systems as well as a high correlation between  
21 electricity supply prices and natural gas prices  
22 since gas generators are typically the marginal  
23 units.

24 This interdependency was highlighted  
25 during the 2013-2014 polar vortex, which resulted in

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2 all time high winter peak demand on the electric  
3 system. At the same time, the cold weather impacted  
4 the operation of some generating facilities.

5 Together, the result was dramatic  
6 increases in electric prices. Although prior to the  
7 polar vortex the Commission had had several policies  
8 in place that required electric utilities to maintain  
9 supply portfolios with the goal of mitigating  
10 electric supply price volatility for their full-  
11 service mass-market customers, customers still face  
12 significant bill increases due to the dramatic  
13 increases in electric supply prices.

14 Following the polar vortex, Staff  
15 worked with utilities to increase the fixed price  
16 hedge level for electric utility residential supply  
17 customers for the winter months. Hedging of  
18 utilities' electric supply portfolio and expected  
19 electricity prices will be covered later in the  
20 presentation.

21 Finally, today's presentation will  
22 include a discussion of the outreach efforts underway  
23 to inform and assist utility customers during the  
24 upcoming winter season.

25 Next slide, please. I will now

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2 introduce our presenters for today. First, Dave  
3 Maioriello will brief you on the gas planning  
4 proceeding, the readiness of the State's natural gas  
5 utilities and then provide you with a projection of  
6 average natural gas bills for the coming winter.

7 Richard Quimby will update you on the  
8 readiness of the bulk electric system, followed by  
9 Paul Darmetko, who will discuss the projections for  
10 electricity supply bills as well as electric  
11 utilities hedging performance and portfolio in place  
12 for the coming winter.

13 Finally, Anna Senatore will conclude  
14 the panel with a discussion of outreach efforts  
15 related to winter bills and safety. Overall, both  
16 the natural gas and electric utilities are prepared  
17 to meet customer needs for the upcoming winter season  
18 but prices will be higher this winter as compared to  
19 last winter. I'll now turn it over to Dave  
20 Maioriello.

21 MR. MAIORIELLO: Thank you, Tammy.  
22 Next slide, please. Good morning, Chair Christian,  
23 and Commissioners. I am Davide Maioriello and I  
24 serve as Utility Engineering Specialist in the  
25 pipeline safety and reliability section of the Office

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2 of Electric, Gas and Water.

3 I will brief you on the status of the  
4 gas planning transition and the results of our annual  
5 review into the readiness of the State's natural gas  
6 utilities for the coming winter.

7 Although each of us will provide more  
8 detail on separate industries, and outreach to  
9 customers overall, the New York gas utilities are  
10 prepared for the coming winter.

11 Next slide, please. Last year, a  
12 generic proceeding to consider issues related to  
13 natural gas utility planning processes was  
14 instituted.

15 This highlighted that there have been  
16 declarations of moratoria by multiple gas utilities  
17 and that existing gas planning, and operational  
18 practices have not kept pace with recent developments  
19 in demands and energy systems, and that planning must  
20 be conducted in a manner consistent with the Climate  
21 Leadership and Community Production Act.

22 Next slide, please. As directed last  
23 year, in March 19th -- in the March 19th order, in  
24 Case 20-G-0131, Staff developed and issued proposals  
25 for moratorium management and to modernize the gas

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2 system planning process.

3 Staff also recognized the importance  
4 of this annual briefing on utility readiness for the  
5 upcoming winter. Staff is now in the process of  
6 reviewing the numerous comments from both  
7 stakeholders and the public that will be taken into  
8 consideration in Staff's future recommendations to  
9 the Commission.

10 Today's briefing is focused on the  
11 coming winter, where the gas planning case has a long  
12 term focus. Next slide, please. We refer to the  
13 State's gas utilities as local distribution companies  
14 or L.D.C.s.

15 Staff's review includes forecast  
16 demand of design weather conditions for this winter  
17 and that both the needed gas supply and capacity is  
18 in place for expected firm customer requirements.

19 Now, and over the winter heating  
20 season, Staff will continue to monitor supply  
21 conditions for any issues that may arise including  
22 price fluctuations and any pipeline disruptions that  
23 may occur along with the performance of our L.D.C.'s  
24 demand response customers, including those that take  
25 interruptible service.

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2 Based upon our rev -- our review  
3 regarding natural gas supply readiness for the  
4 upcoming winter season, Staff concludes that the  
5 L.D.C.s serving New York State will complete their  
6 contracting for adequate natural gas supply, delivery  
7 capacity, and storage inventory to satisfy current  
8 firm customer demands under design winter conditions  
9 for this winter.

10 Staff continues to communicate with  
11 oil industry representatives, the New York State  
12 Energy Research and Development Authority or NYSERDA,  
13 and the gas utilities to ensure that interruptible  
14 customers have access to adequate supplies of winter  
15 heating fuels. This includes coordinating calls  
16 ahead of cold weather events.

17 Next slide, please. Each utility has  
18 a unique mix of assets including pipeline capacity,  
19 storage, and peaking assets that are necessary and  
20 used to serve a unique mix of customers and meet  
21 designed-in conditions of extreme cold weather  
22 events.

23 Interruptible customers are those that  
24 have the ability to stop natural gas usage during  
25 periods of high demand, are important providers of

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2 demand response service and will reduce the amount of  
3 pipeline capacity needed to serve the winter load.

4 More recent filings made by the  
5 L.D.C.s focus on the use of demand site management,  
6 including energy efficiency, demand response, and  
7 other non-pipes alternative -- alternatives to meet  
8 growing demand, especially in areas where local  
9 governments seek to phase out fossil fuels.

10 We continue to monitor some areas of  
11 the State where demand is growing at a faster pace  
12 and where the existing distribute -- distribution  
13 system is constrained, including New York City,  
14 Westchester, and the Capital District.

15 Next slide, please. A gas customer's  
16 utility bill is comprised of several components as  
17 listed here. This presentation focuses on the cost  
18 of supply which is collected through the gas  
19 adjustment charge. The forecast gas adjustment charge  
20 represents approximately 45 percent of the average  
21 statewide bill for the coming winter.

22 Next slide, please. As part of the  
23 annual procurement planning for the upcoming winter,  
24 our gas L.D.C.s procure natural gas supplies  
25 separately from pipeline capacity, and other assets

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2 used to meet the overall firm customer demand.

3 For this coming winter sea -- season,  
4 our L.D.C.s are expecting higher prices for gas  
5 supply with winter heating bills expecting to  
6 increase by 21 percent on an average statewide.  
7 Although forecast supply prices have increased from  
8 last year, overall, they are within the range over  
9 the past decade, as you will see shortly in an  
10 upcoming slide.

11 Next slide, please. Flowing in hedged  
12 gas prices -- price forecasts are both influenced by  
13 trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange or NYMEX.  
14 This chart shows the relative stability of natural  
15 gas prices over the recent past although this will be  
16 strongly influenced by weather and other foreign  
17 factors.

18 Next slide, please. Based on analysis  
19 from the U.S. Energy Information Administration or  
20 E.A. -- E.I.A., there are multiple factors that have  
21 influenced domestic gas market prices, resulting in  
22 increases.

23 As a result of the energy supply  
24 disruptions experienced in Texas in February, natural  
25 gas storage facilities experienced strong

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2 withdrawals, and the impact of multiple hurricanes,  
3 and tropical storms in the Gulf of Mexico this summer  
4 have caused storage refill to be slower than normal.

5 Additionally, energy system  
6 disruptions in Europe has -- has led to strong demand  
7 for liquefied natural gas exports from the U.S. to  
8 Europe, and caused additional price pressure in the  
9 U.S. natural gas markets.

10 Next slide, please. The L.D.C.s  
11 purchase gas to supply their customers' winter needs  
12 in three ways. This is represented by the pie chart  
13 on this slide.

14 The first way is by filling their  
15 natural gas storage facilities during the summer when  
16 demand is low. The second way is by hedging which  
17 acts like an insurance policy to protect against the  
18 high volatility of gas price.

19 The third way is by purchasing at  
20 prevailing market price which fluctuates with mar --  
21 market forces and is called flowing gas. This year,  
22 all three gas supply components are forecasted to be  
23 higher than last year.

24 The price of natural gas is influenced  
25 by many factors we discussed earlier in my

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2 presentation with weather being chief among them.

3 Next slide, please. For this winter  
4 season, we expect the average residential customers'  
5 winter heating bill to be about \$935 for this winter,  
6 assuming normal weather, but this varies by utility.

7 This is higher than last winter due to  
8 the gas price increases discussed earlier and also in  
9 part due to the fact that last winter was warmer  
10 compared to typical weather and that some of the  
11 L.D.C.s have increased delivery rates in accordance  
12 with their most recent approved rate agreements.

13 Next slide, please. Although this  
14 winter statewide average heating bill is forecast to  
15 be higher than last year's, the trend line shows that  
16 forecast bills are in line with bills over the last  
17 decade, but actual bills will vary depending on  
18 factors such as weather.

19 Next slide, please. In conclusion,  
20 our review indicates that the L.D.C.s serving New  
21 York have secured adequate contracts for supplies of  
22 natural gas to meet expected firm customer  
23 requirements this coming winter.

24 However, Staff will continue our  
25 traditional monitoring of supply, prices, and

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2 interruptible customer compliance throughout the  
3 winter as well as any ongoing work on interstate  
4 pipelines to ensure system integrity and report any  
5 situations that require the Commission's attention.

6 Staff will continue to work with the  
7 L.D.C.s and interested communities to find innovative  
8 solutions to the challenges represented by increased  
9 demand for natural gas and the implications of the  
10 C.L.C.P.A.

11 This concludes my portion of the  
12 presentation and I will be happy to take questions  
13 after the panel has finished. Next slide, please. I  
14 will now turn it over to Richard.

15 MR. QUIMBY: Good morning, Chair  
16 Christian, and Commissioners. My name is Richard  
17 Quimby and I'm a Power Systems Operations Specialist  
18 in the Department's Electric Safety and Reliability  
19 Section.

20 I'm here today to brief you on Staff's  
21 review of the bulk electric systems preparedness for  
22 the upcoming 2021-2022 winter period. At the outset,  
23 I would like to say that based upon our review, we  
24 conclude that the bulk electric system is prepared to  
25 reliably meet the State's upcoming winter electric

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2 demands.

3 Next slide, please. This chart shows  
4 the summer and winter historic electric peak since  
5 the year 2000. It also shows that New York State is  
6 a summer peaking State and therefore has to have  
7 sufficient available capacity -- capability to meet  
8 loads well above those typically experienced during  
9 the winter.

10 Last winter's actual electric peak  
11 load was 22,542 megawatts. This is 3,196 megawatts  
12 lower than the all-time winter peak of 25,738  
13 megawatts, which occurred during the prolonged cold  
14 spell during the 2013-2014 winter, which we refer to  
15 as the polar vortex. The electric peak forecast for  
16 the upcoming winter period is 24,025 megawatts.

17 Next slide, please. This slide  
18 summarizes the resources expected to be available to  
19 New York during the winter. These resources include  
20 generation, demand response resources called special  
21 case resources, and purchases from outside New York  
22 State.

23 These resources are offset by expected  
24 unavailability or outage of generation resources.  
25 The NYISO expects to have 35,744 megawatts in net

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2 capacity resources available during the winter to  
3 serve the forecasted peak load of 24,025 megawatts.

4 Once operating reserves, which are  
5 resources available to meet sudden system  
6 contingencies are accounted for, there remains a  
7 capacity margin of 9,099 megawatts. In short, we  
8 have sufficient capability to serve the forecasted  
9 load during the upcoming winter.

10 Next slide, please. A winter  
11 coordination protocol is in place to facilitate  
12 communication between State agencies and the NYISO in  
13 circumstances where fuel supply for generation  
14 facilities may be at risk or if a generator owner  
15 needs a fuel specification waiver from the D.E.C. to  
16 maintain reliability. The State agencies involved  
17 are the D.P.S., D.E.C., NYSERDA and D.O.T.

18 As part of Staff's winter assessment,  
19 we reached out to major generation facilities owners  
20 in Southeast New York who own about 12,000 megawatts  
21 of dual fuel generation capability.

22 The dual fuel capability enables  
23 generators to burn either natural gas or oil  
24 depending on the situation, which can be driven by  
25 economics or unavailability of one of the fuels.

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2 We found that these owners are  
3 continuing to implement lessons learned from past  
4 winter experiences, including having increased pre-  
5 winter on-site fuel reserves, having firm contracts  
6 with fuel oil suppliers, conducting more aggressive  
7 replenishment plans and having more proactive pre-  
8 winter maintenance and facility preparations.

9 Staff also met with the NYISO and  
10 discussed its procedures and protocols for the winter  
11 period. In recent -- recent years, the NYISO has  
12 instituted various changes to help ensure electrical  
13 reliability during -- during periods of tight natural  
14 gas supply including closely monitoring generator,  
15 fuel levels and replenishment.

16 In addition, the NYISO has improved  
17 communications with interstate pipelines, local gas  
18 distribution companies and neighboring I.S.O.s during  
19 periods of tight electric operating conditions.

20 That concludes my presentation. I  
21 will now -- now turn it over to Paul. Thank you.  
22 Next slide, please.

23 MR. DARMETKO: Thank you, Richard.  
24 Good Morning, Chair Christian. Good morning,  
25 Commissioners. My name is Paul Darmetko. I'm

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2 Utility Supervisor in the Office of Electric, Gas and  
3 Water in the Upstate rates and tariff section.

4 As Tammy mentioned, I'll be providing  
5 you with information on how the utilities have  
6 performed at reducing the electric supply price  
7 volatility for their full-service residential  
8 customers, talk a little bit about the Statewide  
9 portfolio that the utilities have in place this  
10 winter, and also provide you with an estimate of what  
11 the Statewide full-service residential customer  
12 supply bills may look like this coming winter  
13 compared to the last few years if we experience  
14 normal weather.

15 Next slide, please. This graph shows  
16 the results of utilities electric supply price  
17 volatility mitigation efforts since December of 2008.  
18 It compares the average New York I.S.O. data at  
19 market price volatility, the red line with the  
20 volatility of the utilities residential electric  
21 supply portfolios, the blue line.

22 Each point represents the price  
23 volatility over a 12-month period as measured by the  
24 coefficient of variation. The high point that you  
25 see on the graph represents the volatility that was

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2 experienced due to the 2014 polar vortex, which  
3 resulted in a significant increase in market prices  
4 and price volatility.

5 Even though customers benefited from  
6 the hedges the utilities had in place, the bill  
7 impacts that customers experienced were very high,  
8 but not as high as it would have been absent the  
9 utility hedging. As a result of lessons learned from  
10 the 2014 polar vortex, the utilities modified certain  
11 aspects of their hedging programs.

12 These changes generally include  
13 increasing the fixed price hedge level for the  
14 residential supply customers during the winter months  
15 from about 55 percent to about 70 percent on a  
16 Statewide average basis, as well as maintaining  
17 multiple portfolios to better hedge their customers  
18 located in different regions of their service  
19 territories.

20 As you can see from the chart, the  
21 utilities have continued to perform well at reducing  
22 the portfolio price volatility compared to market and  
23 similar to the last few years, the utilities have  
24 maintained on average a 70 percent fixed price hedge  
25 level for this coming winter to mitigate market price

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2 volatility if it occurs.

3 Next slide, please. This side -- this  
4 slide compares the last several years of the  
5 Statewide average full service residential winter  
6 supply bills assuming a typical monthly use of 600  
7 kilowatt hours per month, to what we estimate the  
8 typical supply bill may be this winter season, again,  
9 if we experience normal weather.

10 On average, the supply costs represent  
11 about 30 to 40 percent of a typical full service  
12 residential customer's total bill. The rest of the  
13 bill being delivery and surcharge related. These  
14 non-supply portions of the bill typically only change  
15 with customer use, or the Commission's approved  
16 changes through -- in rates through various  
17 proceedings.

18 The supply portion of the bill tends  
19 to be more volatile and fluctuates with customer use,  
20 changes in the New York I.S.O. market prices, as well  
21 as the utilities hedging port -- portfolio  
22 compositions.

23 As you can see, at this point going  
24 into the winter, we projected on a statewide average  
25 basis a typical full-service residential supply bill

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2           will be about 13 percent higher on average than last  
3           winter, which is mainly due to increase in generator  
4           fuel prices for all the reasons Dave already talked  
5           about, as well as last winter being warmer than  
6           average for most of the winter.

7                   I will note that last winter, we did  
8           experience a cold snap in February, which caused the  
9           electric market prices to rise sharply temporarily  
10          but because of the utilities hedging practices, the  
11          full service residential customers were not  
12          significantly impacted by the market price increase.

13                   Because this chart shows the Statewide  
14          average supply bill, full service residential  
15          customers should expect their actual bills to differ  
16          from what is shown here based on their actual energy  
17          use, the location of the State they're located, the  
18          utility they're served by as well as differences in  
19          weather from normal.

20                   The purpose of this chart is to  
21          provide what the trend has been historically and to  
22          provide an estimate of where supply costs may end up  
23          this winter season.

24                   If it's a mild winter, we would expect  
25          the Statewide average supply bill to be lower.  If

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2 it's colder than normal, we would expect the bill to  
3 be higher than what is shown here, although still  
4 mitigated by the utility's hedges.

5 In closing, as of right now if we  
6 experienced normal weather, it is projected that  
7 full-service statewide residential supply bills this  
8 winter season will be higher than last winter.

9 However, the utilities have taken  
10 steps to mitigate the supply price spikes for their  
11 full-service mass-market residential customers in the  
12 event the weather does turn cold or other system  
13 conditions occur that would cause the market price of  
14 electricity to spike by maintaining an approximate 70  
15 percent fixed price hedged level for this winter  
16 season.

17 That concludes my portion of the  
18 presentation. I'll now turn the presentation over to  
19 Anna.

20 MS. SENATORE: Thank you, Paul. Good  
21 morning, Chair Christian, and Commissioners. My name  
22 is Anna Senatore, and I'm a Manager in the  
23 Department's Consumer Outreach and Education Unit.

24 Due to the challenging economic  
25 conditions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and

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2 higher energy costs forecast for the coming months,  
3 many New Yorkers may have difficulty managing their  
4 winter bills.

5 This situation will parti --  
6 particularly harm -- be hard on vulnerable customers  
7 like elderly and families with fixed or low incomes.  
8 This report describes the outreach efforts being  
9 implemented by the Department Staff and New York  
10 State Energy utilities to provide consumers with  
11 information to help manage their energy usage and  
12 lower their bills as well as raise awareness of  
13 consumer protections available during the 2021-2022  
14 winter season.

15 Next slide, please. In light of the  
16 economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the  
17 forecasted increases in commodity prices, it is  
18 critical that the Department and the utilities pursue  
19 aggressive winter preparedness campaigns, including  
20 promoting the following key messages.

21 How market forces affect natural gas  
22 and electric prices. Financial assistance is  
23 available to help with winter bills including the  
24 Home Energy Assistance Program, as well as a Home  
25 Heating Aid announced by Governor Kathy Hochul on

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2           September 30th, 2021.

3                               Under the new program, more than \$373  
4           million is available for low and middle income New  
5           Yorkers who need assistance keeping their homes warm  
6           during the upcoming winter season.  Eligible  
7           homeowners and renters may receive up to \$751 in  
8           heating assistance depending on their income,  
9           household -- household size and how they heat their  
10          home.

11                              Consumers can also manage winter bills  
12          through programs such as budget billing and deferred  
13          payment agreements, the availability of  
14          weatherization programs, as well as simple,  
15          affordable measures consumers can take to reduce  
16          energy use and lower their bills.

17                              Consumer Protection Rules that protect  
18          consumers from service terminations during cold  
19          weather as well as resources to assist consumers  
20          faced with heat related energy emergencies and safety  
21          information regarding natural gas, electricity,  
22          carbon monoxide, and storm-related service  
23          interruptions.

24                              Next slide, please.  Last year, as a  
25          result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of

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2           Consumer Services restructured our winter  
3           preparedness campaign to focus on new ways to  
4           broadcast these important messages to utility  
5           consumers.

6                                In lieu of in-person events and  
7           distributing physical copies of our publications,  
8           Staff made greater use of virtual platforms, such as  
9           the Department's website and -- and social media  
10          channels, as well as connecting with our partner  
11          organizations through email and online events.

12                               This year to expand and enhance --  
13          enhance the reach of our messages, we will be  
14          combining our traditional grassroots program and  
15          these new virtual outreach channels.

16                               The Department uses plain language  
17          publications to highlight our core messages about  
18          financial assistance and bill management options,  
19          consumer protections, energy efficiency, and safety.

20                               All winter campaign publications are  
21          available in English and Spanish, and most are also  
22          available in Chinese, Haitian Creole, Bengali,  
23          Korean, Russian, and Yiddish.

24                               Staff distributes these publications  
25          through our grassroots outreach, including in-person

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2 and virtual presentations to community groups as well  
3 as public events such as senior expos, home shows and  
4 social media.

5 To make our information more  
6 accessible to utility consumers, we will create a  
7 dedicated page on the Ask PSC website with winter  
8 preparedness information, digital copies of our  
9 publications, energy efficiency, and winter safety  
10 tips, and links to utility and New York State  
11 Assistance Programs.

12 Similar to last year's effort, we will  
13 develop a list of tips and sound bites that will be  
14 posted on the Department's social media accounts  
15 throughout the winter months. The Department's  
16 social media platforms will also be used to drive  
17 traffic to the Ask PSC winter preparedness web page.

18 Next slide, please. To amplify the  
19 Department's messaging, we will invite our network of  
20 nearly 6,000 consumer leaders, including social  
21 service agencies, community organizations, libraries,  
22 and local governments to partner with us in educating  
23 consumers about their winter energy costs and bill  
24 management options.

25 At the start of the winter campaign we

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2           will send a letter to our consumer leaders announcing  
3           the winter preparedness program.  The letter will  
4           include an offer to order our materials free of  
5           charge and we'll encourage our partners to distribute  
6           the Department's publications to their constituents.

7                   The letter will also inform our  
8           partners that Staff is available to provide  
9           presentations to consumer groups upon request.  
10          Finally, the letter will direct our partners to the  
11          winter preparedness page on the Ask PSC webpage for  
12          additional resources.

13                   Based on feedback we received from our  
14          partners last year, we are currently updating the  
15          website to make it easier to download and share our  
16          digital materials.

17                   We will conduct follow-up email  
18          campaigns throughout the winter season, which will  
19          target community leaders that have not opened a  
20          previous email.

21                   In addition to distributing  
22          publications and educational materials, Staff will  
23          once again host virtual workshops for elected  
24          officials and interested consumer groups.

25                   To reach audiences who cannot attend

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2 the live presentation, a copy of the workshop  
3 recording and presentation slides will be posted on  
4 the Ask PSC webpage, and a follow-up email with  
5 presentation materials will be sent to the attendees.

6 We are seeking to expand the workshops  
7 this year targeting consumer leaders in specific  
8 regions such as Metro New York area, Hudson Valley,  
9 Capital Region, North Country, Central, and Western  
10 New York.

11 We are also reaching out to other New  
12 York State agencies that offer winter preparedness,  
13 financial assistance, and energy efficiency programs  
14 to invite them to participate.

15 We are hoping to leverage their  
16 knowledge and contacts to create a one-stop shopping  
17 opportunity to our partners and achieve maximum  
18 penetration of our joint messaging with information  
19 relevant to the region.

20 Next slide, please. In addition to  
21 the Department's outreach program, Staff is working  
22 with utility companies to encourage them to offer  
23 strong winter preparedness, customer outreach and  
24 education programs to ensure this messaging reaches  
25 the broadest possible audience.

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2 Each utility company has provided  
3 Staff with it's -- with it's outreach and education  
4 plan to alert customers about topics such as  
5 commodity price estimate, COVID relief, shopping for  
6 energy supply and ways consumers can conserve energy,  
7 and reduce heating bills, as well as to raise  
8 awareness about finance -- available financial  
9 assistance programs, and bill management options.

10 Utility companies are using a variety  
11 of vehicles to reach their customers including email  
12 campaigns, text alerts, news releases, radio, paid  
13 media ads, financial assistance webinars, mailings,  
14 newsletters, bill inserts, and bill envelope  
15 messages, on-hold telephone messages and outbound  
16 calling, school programs and community events,  
17 website features including translation services and  
18 social media platforms.

19 The utilities also work with municipal  
20 and elected officials and partner with human service  
21 organizations and community groups to broadcast the  
22 winter preparedness messages.

23 Finally, the utilities provide  
24 training to their consumer advocates and call center  
25 on winter messaging and consumer assistance. In

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2 conclusion, the Office of Consumer Services Winter  
3 Energy Outreach and Education Program is designed to  
4 ensure New York State utility customers have access  
5 to the information about programs that will help them  
6 manage their winter energy bills and educate them on  
7 how to be more energy efficient and stay safe.

8 Staff will continue to refine our  
9 outreach and education efforts during these  
10 unprecedented and uncertain times. Finally, we will  
11 monitor and work with the utilities to make the  
12 modifications as needed throughout the heating  
13 season.

14 That concludes my portion of this  
15 presentation. I will now turn it -- return at our --  
16 return our presentation back to Tammy. Thank you.

17 MS. MITCHELL: Thank you, Anna. Chair  
18 Christian, and Commissioners, this concludes our  
19 presentation on the natural gas and electric utility  
20 winter preparedness. We're now available for any  
21 questions you may have.

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you for  
23 that presentation. I want to thank you for your work  
24 in helping New York prepare for this coming winter  
25 season. This is going to be the second winter during

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2 the pandemic and it's going to be colder, potentially  
3 more costly than the prior one.

4 And -- you know, with many New Yorkers  
5 already suffering from arrears, and falling behind  
6 and being in the unfortunate position of having to  
7 choose between paying for heat or feeding their  
8 families. I want to reiterate some of what was just  
9 stated by Ms. Senatore.

10 You know, there are several Federal  
11 utility and community based programs available  
12 throughout the State that provide the support and I  
13 want to thank you for sharing that information today.

14 And I want to encourage New Yorkers in  
15 need to take advantage of these opportunities that  
16 are available. They take the form, as you pointed  
17 out of direct financial assistance and technical  
18 assistance to help lower energy costs for individual  
19 with needs, both in the form of direct financial  
20 payments, and in the form of technical support in  
21 repairing or replacing heating equipment.

22 And there also exists balanced billing  
23 options, which can spread the cost out for an  
24 extended period of time, helping lower monthly  
25 expenses for individuals by spreading it out over

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2 several months.

3 So these programs along with the  
4 existing protections and the enhancements, recently  
5 enacted, combined will help mitigate the impact of  
6 these coming winter season on many New Yorkers.

7 I want to add that we're going to post  
8 information about these programs on the site at the  
9 conclusion of this meeting and I encourage all New  
10 Yorkers to view that and take advantage of it where  
11 possible.

12 Do any other Commissioners have any  
13 questions or comments? Commissioner Burman?

14 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: Thank you.  
15 First, I want to thank Staff for the incredible job,  
16 not just in briefing us, but in working behind the  
17 scenes on these really important, important issues.

18 We need to be really sure that we're  
19 working as hard as we can dealing with these system  
20 issues and the impact on consumers. I'm really  
21 concerned, as I generally am every winter, as we head  
22 into it.

23 It's not enough for me to feel that  
24 we're -- we're hoping for a warm winter. We really  
25 need to look at it in all that we can do and the

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2 lessons that we've learned as we've looked at from  
3 the polar vortex, but not just -- just what we're  
4 doing now, I think we need to do more.

5 For me, it's also really a true  
6 analysis of what the costs are. To me the price  
7 issues seem to be downplayed. I am concerned that  
8 there's going to be major sticker shock if the  
9 current trends hold.

10 I'm also really concerned about the  
11 low natural gas storage. We're down in the east.  
12 It's a trend that is concerning to me. Oil prices  
13 are going to be impacted that the oil price is going  
14 to impact and have a potentially negative impact on  
15 what we're doing.

16 I guess, I'd really like to look at  
17 how are we going to manage if there is a cold snap,  
18 as well as if there is a -- God forbid, an incident.

19 We've had in the past, you know,  
20 problems. We are -- while, and this is -- the prices  
21 are not unique to New York. We are on the east and  
22 in New York, we do have system constraints.

23 So I really like to kind of try to get  
24 a little bit more under the hood, if not here, but  
25 later in truly examining some of this and what that

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2 means.

3 It's not enough for me to say that  
4 well, we're good this winter. I want to understand  
5 what that good means, talked about this before in  
6 other sessions. What does it mean in terms of  
7 interruptible customers remaining on oil?

8 What does it mean in terms of possible  
9 lost economic development opportunities, if we're  
10 constraining the ability for people to come, and they  
11 need access to gas and they can't get it, because  
12 we've looked at and noted that the pipeline serving  
13 New York State are constrained.

14 So it's important to ensure that gas  
15 utility growth does not outstrip available resources.  
16 I wholeheartedly agree with that. What I don't agree  
17 with is that we are still seeing a demand for that.  
18 I don't want to go back to the days where customers  
19 Downstate are screaming that there's a moratorium and  
20 we need to figure out and lift it.

21 So I just wonder if you can talk a  
22 little bit more directly on those issues for me.

23 MS. MITCHELL: So I -- I'll turn it  
24 over to Cindy in a moment, but we certainly share  
25 your concerns on, you know, both the constraints on

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2 the system as well as, you know, the pricing impacts  
3 that we're seeing and how that's going to impact  
4 customers.

5 I mean, we could do a follow-up  
6 briefing where we get under the hood a little bit  
7 more and you know what -- what stressing the system  
8 would look like. But you know, as you heard today,  
9 yes, we look at it for preparedness for a winter-  
10 designed day but there are contingencies that can  
11 happen and -- you know, we could go through what each  
12 of those would mean.

13 But we do have protocols in place.  
14 And we do, you know, we are in contact at all times  
15 with the L.D.C.s, and the I.S.O. and the pipeline  
16 owners as well on a daily basis, and particularly if  
17 we see any incidents occurring. Cindy, do you want  
18 to add anything?

19 MS. MCCARRAN: I would just add, you  
20 know, in preparing for this briefing that we do every  
21 October, we do receive five-year forecasts from the  
22 utilities. And for the most part, there is no issue  
23 in the next five years.

24 Now, clearly National Grid Downstate,  
25 you know, the Commissioners are all aware of there's

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2           a special process going on there.  So that clearly is  
3           -- is still ongoing.  You know, we have no indication  
4           from any of the utilities that they will be declaring  
5           a moratorium in any part of the State in the near  
6           future.

7                    You know, nobody can predict exactly  
8           what's going to happen, you know, too far out.  But  
9           at least for now, we're convinced that -- especially  
10          for all firm customers, we can ensure reliable  
11          service going forward for several years.

12                   You know, our hope, of course, is that  
13          the energy efficiency and demand response programs  
14          really take hold with customers in the next couple of  
15          years and we start seeing a downward trend in natural  
16          gas demand.

17                   And we need to do everything we can to  
18          encourage customers to take advantage of those  
19          programs.  But -- you know, that being said, we are  
20          assured of the reliability of the system for the near  
21          future.

22                   COMMISSIONER BURMAN:  Thank you, I  
23          appreciate that.  I do want to push back a little  
24          bit, though, because we cannot just rely on our hope  
25          for energy efficiency and demand response, and heat

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2 pumps being the viable solution.

3 And we have to be honest in what that  
4 means in terms of the increased potential cost to  
5 ratepayers, the increased potential lack of ability  
6 to get energy that they may want and we may go back  
7 to some of that streamlining.

8 You know, I kind of look at it and  
9 say, for us, it should be really, really important  
10 that we are being open and transparent in some of  
11 those challenges. And what it actually may look  
12 like, if worst case scenario, all the interruptible  
13 customers have to remain on oil, if all -- the folks  
14 can't get what they need.

15 And kind of go through that, and look  
16 at it in a way that I think gives us more valuable  
17 information and also for customers who are upset that  
18 they can't expand their business or put on an extra  
19 addition to their home. Or it takes a long time to  
20 be able to do that.

21 We get -- you know, Kevin did, I think  
22 a great information item on the resiliency of the  
23 system and looking at it and talked in numbers in  
24 terms of the disconnections during a storm, and how  
25 long it took -- took.

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2 We get from time to time customers  
3 upset that it's taking a long time for them to get  
4 their gas hookups just, you know, in general. We  
5 should be looking at those numbers. We should be  
6 understanding it, and we should be trying to help.

7 If there's an issue with working with  
8 the municipalities or the building departments, we  
9 should really try to figure that out, but I just  
10 don't think it's acceptable to say that we need to  
11 ensure that gas utility growth does not -- not  
12 outstrip available resources without -- without  
13 getting very specific on what that actually means for  
14 customers.

15 And then working through that to be  
16 able to be much more responsive to those issues ahead  
17 of time, so thank you. The other thing I do want to  
18 thank Anna for sharing on what's happening with the  
19 consumer outreach and education. I think that's  
20 really vital.

21 I personally believe that that is  
22 something that we can get under the hood a lot more  
23 on and I -- I look forward to engaging on that issue.  
24 I will say that the Federal assistance and the State  
25 assistance on the Home Heating Aid and the HEAP

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2 program is really, really important for us to make  
3 sure that it is getting done efficiently, effectively  
4 and that people are made aware of that program.

5 It's not a new program. I know it's  
6 couched as a new program. It's not a new program.  
7 It's a program that happens every year. Funding is  
8 vital for us to make sure that we're getting it as  
9 appropriate from -- from the Federal Government and  
10 to making sure that we're partners in that.

11 So I just want to point that out that  
12 that's a really important program for us to make sure  
13 that it's getting done correctly. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.  
15 Commissioner Alesi?

16 COMMISSIONER ALESI: Thank you, Mr.  
17 Chair. It's quite an in-depth and comprehensive  
18 report that we've seen here. And no doubt the result  
19 of the dedication and professionalism of the Staff.  
20 And I'm grateful for this remarkable effort, and the  
21 very valuable outcome that we've been presented with,  
22 all around good job. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.  
24 Commissioner Edwards?

25 COMMISSIONER EDWARDS: Yes, thank you

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2            very much, Chair.  I am a little concerned about the  
3            timing of the forecasts as it relates to consumers  
4            finding out that their bills are going to be  
5            increased by 20 percent and 13 percent.

6                    Have we communicated or have the  
7            utilities communicated this forecast yet?  And if so,  
8            how?  And if not, how can we improve this so that we  
9            are telling people what to expect.  Finding out now  
10           in October that their bills are going to increase for  
11           this particular winter season is a little bit late.

12                   MS. SENATORE:  Commissioner Edwards,  
13            thank you for your feedback and your question.  I can  
14            address the question about what we can do, what --  
15            how we can enhance our program to ensure that  
16            customers are made aware of the potential increase --  
17            increase in bills.

18                    So the first thing we're going to do  
19            is, we have a Energy Outlook Fact Sheet that includes  
20            this information.  And we plan -- plan on publishing  
21            it on our Ask PSC webpage.  And we plan on sharing it  
22            via the email campaign that we will send out.  And  
23            what I propose we will -- we do is that we -- we  
24            start sending those out as soon as possible, it could  
25            be in the next couple weeks.

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2 And in terms of what utilities are  
3 already doing, I'm going to defer the question to  
4 Erin. We did receive their outreach plans for their  
5 winter preparedness. And I believe they have already  
6 began implementing them.

7 COMMISSIONER EDWARDS: Okay. Just to  
8 clarify. I understand that you're doing the outreach  
9 on a going forward basis. My concern is how early  
10 did we get this forecast? And how quickly can we --  
11 should we have been able to get this information to  
12 the consumers?

13 MS. KELLER: Actually, I'll ask Cindy,  
14 part of that question about the forecast.

15 MS. MCCARRAN: Yeah, the problem is  
16 that the utilities don't complete their -- their  
17 hedging for the winter, or know what the futures  
18 prices are going to be very far ahead.

19 So really, I would say we knew -- you  
20 know, end of August, beginning of September that this  
21 -- you know, the -- the bill increases were going to  
22 be this sizable, but there's really no way to know it  
23 before that time period and we did start socializing  
24 that message internally at that point.

25 COMMISSIONER EDWARDS: Okay. So you

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2 know, it's not really a forecast though, right?  
3 Because a forecast you really know a lot earlier. So  
4 I think we need to push back on getting this  
5 information so that consumers can prepare adequately  
6 for these increase in bills.

7 Because you know, finding out in  
8 October that your winter bill is going to go -- your  
9 winter season it's going to go up 20 percent and 13  
10 percent is not small, especially because of what  
11 economic conditions that we are now.

12 So I think we really need to do  
13 something so that it is a true forecast, and we can  
14 let people know a little bit earlier. My other  
15 comment -- and not for today, but I would like to  
16 have a better understanding of what assumptions that  
17 the utilities used from an economic development and  
18 housing to ensure that they have -- are going to have  
19 adequate supply.

20 So there's a lot of economic  
21 development that's going around the State. I would  
22 like to better understand what utilities use as those  
23 business and residential construction and  
24 improvements because I -- you know, we can't put  
25 ourselves in the position that we were in years ago

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2 with this moratorium.

3 And I think the better we understand  
4 what assumptions that they use, and what the process  
5 is of collecting those assumptions, the better off  
6 that we will be, to Commissioner Burman's point that  
7 you know, we can't hope, we have to know. And the  
8 more we find out about the process and assumptions  
9 that are used to that. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.  
11 Commissioner Howard?

12 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Just a couple of  
13 comments. First is both the Chairman and  
14 Commissioner Burman made reference to our -- our  
15 assistant -- direct assistance programs, HEAP in  
16 particular being the cheap one.

17 New Yorkers should know that the vast,  
18 vast, vast majority of that funding comes from the  
19 Federal Government, not from the State Treasury. So  
20 it is my hope, again, another admonition to the  
21 members of Congress on two things. That we will  
22 probably see nationally a dramatic need for an  
23 increase in emergency HEAP going forward. And that's  
24 something that they could do and must do, I believe  
25 in the next month or so in order to make that new

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2 dollars and enhanced dollars available to states for  
3 -- for distribution.

4 And particularly given the -- it's not  
5 just a New York problem, but the arrears problem is a  
6 national problem and quite honestly, we have been --  
7 to the extent we've been able to make a dent in it  
8 here in New York, those monies have come from the  
9 Federal Government.

10 Additionally to that, the Congress  
11 needs to increase the base level of HEAP funding. It  
12 has been -- we've known it's been wholly inadequate  
13 for many years since the beginning of the program.  
14 And given the issue of arrears and the pandemic  
15 impacts it is only more acute that that base level  
16 needs to be increased as well.

17 The last comment I have is as Cindy  
18 pointed out, and Tammy pointed out as well, we are  
19 not only competing for natural gas supplies in North  
20 America with our neighbors across North America.  
21 We're now competing with Europeans for that same  
22 supply. That is a new and growing phenomenon.

23 When President Trump announced and  
24 with great glee new L.N.G. ports in the Gulf, that is  
25 gas that would not be available to us here. Which

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2 could help -- help mitigate our price problem right  
3 now, and certainly could help mitigate our long term  
4 storage issues.

5 So another cautionary tale from the  
6 Federal Government is while we celebrate our inner --  
7 energy independence and our new export goals for  
8 liquid natural gas, people need to know it will have  
9 a real price impact here for every dekatherm going to  
10 Belgium, that's a dekatherm that does not go to  
11 Brooklyn. So with that, I'd like to thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.  
13 Commissioner Valesky?

14 COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Well said,  
15 Commissioner Howard. I just like to go back for just  
16 a minute, I don't know that it's a question. But one  
17 of -- sort of reiterate one of the points that  
18 Commissioner Edwards was making in regard to the  
19 timeliness of the programs that we in fact do have  
20 Anna and -- and thanks very much for -- for  
21 summarizing them.

22 Do -- I do have a question. The --  
23 the outreach work that the Department does and the  
24 utilities do, hopefully do. Does that wait -- and  
25 again, this is my first time through as a new

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2 Commissioner, first time through this presentation.

3 Do those programs or the initiation of  
4 those programs wait until this formal presentation to  
5 the Commission happens? Or have you already begun a  
6 number of those outreach efforts?

7 MS. SENATORE: In terms of the  
8 Department works some of it has already begun. For  
9 example, we had the Home Show this past weekend in  
10 Long Island, in part of the State at least and we  
11 updated the HEAP information on our consumer  
12 assistance fact sheet and that was shared at the Home  
13 Show.

14 And the Ask PSC webpages, some of  
15 those pages have already been updated. And one in  
16 particular called Managing Utility Costs, which is on  
17 our featured site menu and it has the HEAP  
18 information as well. And it has the current dates  
19 and information. And all the links have been updated  
20 to ensure that people can get to the websites where  
21 they can apply.

22 So some of the work has already begun,  
23 but there's a lot more that we still need to do. And  
24 I take your comments and your feedback very  
25 seriously. And I do think that we could do more to

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2 begin this process earlier, as long as we have the  
3 facts and information from the OEGW team to make sure  
4 that our fact sheets are accurate.

5 COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Sure.

6 MS. SENATORE: So hopefully that  
7 answers your question.

8 COMMISSIONER VALESKY: It does. And I  
9 appreciate hearing you say that after all this is --  
10 this is an item that is a presentation not something  
11 that is voted upon by us as a Commission.

12 So we appreciate the information. But  
13 its timeliness isn't necessarily linked to the  
14 timeliness of your program. So I appreciate hearing  
15 you say that.

16 I would also add, again, on this point  
17 that Commissioner Edwards initially raised. I think  
18 the public ratepayers will see these programs  
19 certainly as more important and perhaps more  
20 impactful during the times when prices are rising.  
21 But even when they're not, they're still incredibly  
22 helpful to millions of New Yorkers across the State.

23 So regardless, Cindy, to your point  
24 about when we get forecasting information, although,  
25 you know, what happened in Texas, eight months ago

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2 now was eight months ago now.

3 So we've known some of these things  
4 for a while. I would, again, continue to encourage  
5 you to not necessarily wait for -- for forecasting  
6 and -- and to effectuate these programs as quickly as  
7 possible on an annual basis and to the degree that we  
8 can be helpful as a Commission, we'd be certainly  
9 anxious to do that. Thank you very much.

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.  
11 Commissioner Maggiore?

12 COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Thank you. So  
13 I want to thank Staff for the presentation. You  
14 know, many of my thoughts have been expressed by some  
15 of my colleagues, but I will say just a couple  
16 things, you know, Anna I just want to reiterate, I  
17 think that the work that you outlined is going to  
18 make a huge difference.

19 It's no small thing to a lot of New  
20 Yorkers that their bills are going to go up and the  
21 success of the outreach program is going to be  
22 enormously meaningful for a lot of people.

23 So I just want to mention that. The  
24 other thing is, Commissioner Valesky had indicated  
25 we're not voting on something today but, you know, as

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2 we go forward, you know, I -- I just remind myself  
3 that the mission of the Public Service Commission  
4 links safety, reliability, environmental impact, and  
5 affordability. And I don't think that they could be  
6 torn apart, I don't think that we could hit two out  
7 of three and do our job.

8 So you know -- and the consequences of  
9 future votes that we might have to take or actions  
10 that we might have to take, you know, I will reflect  
11 through the lens of this presentation today.

12 So you know, thank you very much. I  
13 think it's enormously instructive and informative  
14 presentation, and I think, as always, Staff has done  
15 good work. Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: All right. Thank  
17 you. We'll now move to the consent agenda. Do any  
18 Commissioners wish to comment on or recuse from  
19 voting on any of the items on the consent agenda?  
20 Beginning with Commissioner Burman.

21 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: I have three  
22 items. The first is item 261. This is the  
23 Greenlight Networks item where we did in order back  
24 in August, I believe, in the -- approving the joint  
25 proposal settlement. I was supportive of that order

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2 then adopting the joint settlement. However, I did  
3 raise concerns at that time.

4 Now, we are -- we were asked to vote  
5 on a petition for clarification and/or rehearing. We  
6 are voting on the petition for clarification. And we  
7 are clarifying here that the monies that are to be  
8 given as part of the settlement are to be put into  
9 escrow.

10 That clarification I completely agree  
11 with, I think it's important. I do note that if we  
12 were voting today on it as a petition for rehearing,  
13 I would be voting no because I believe even if we  
14 don't legally need to, petitions for rehearing should  
15 always be noticed and SAPA'd and so that's important  
16 to me.

17 It's a long standing position I have  
18 not withstanding other legal analysis which I  
19 understand.

20 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: I do point out  
21 though that I still have concerns in joint proposals  
22 that are settled and that come before us that don't  
23 necessarily retain the Commission jurisdiction board  
24 expressly.

25 I don't believe that we should be

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2 giving to the New York State, Empire State  
3 Development B.P.O. office, the monies to do as they  
4 determine is appropriate.

5 At the last session, I spoke about the  
6 need for an M.O.U. that would be in place with D.P.S.  
7 and the B.P.O. I think that M.O.U. is really, really  
8 important.

9 We have a responsibility to make sure  
10 that the funding whether it's from ratepayers or  
11 utility shareholders, is done in a way that ensures  
12 that that funding is invested wisely.

13 We have many different ongoing matters  
14 that include the broadband issues, including a  
15 broadband proceeding that we'll be getting under the  
16 hood.

17 It's really important for us to have  
18 much more control as an agency and as a Commission in  
19 making sure that funding is invested wisely. And  
20 that we're looking very carefully at that.

21 So for me, I'm just reiterating again  
22 my desire to make sure that that M.O.U. and that the  
23 ongoing working relationship with the B.P.O. ensures  
24 that we are not just a ministerial step in their  
25 ability to spend, and that our Staffs' expertise in

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2 this matter is carefully considered and weighted, and  
3 that we make sure that it's appropriately invested.

4 And then in the future, I do believe  
5 that for future joint proposals, the direct linkage  
6 to the matter to be settled. But also keeping in  
7 mind that when we are looking at follow-up actions,  
8 we need to retain more oversight and control,  
9 especially when it involves the dollars.

10 Kudos to the utility. They have since  
11 the order in August, done significantly well in their  
12 performance, execution as defined in the order. And  
13 I'm glad to see that that was in the initial order,  
14 and that we are seeing success from that.

15 I do know that there's still an  
16 outstanding matter to be resolved on Greenlight  
17 itself with the order to show cause. I won't  
18 prejudge that. But I am interested in that being  
19 resolved appropriately in the best interest of the  
20 public. Or --.

21 MR. SIPOS: Commissioner, could I just  
22 respond briefly to that?

23 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: Sure.

24 MR. SIPOS: Staff did hear your  
25 recommendation at the August session and has been

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2           working on preparing a memorandum of understanding,  
3           Brian Ossias and Director LaBelle are -- are working  
4           on that.  And we will keep the Chair and the  
5           Commissioners informed as we proceed on that.

6                                COMMISSIONER BURMAN:  Great, thank  
7           you.  And make sure not to give away our control and  
8           oversight, that's really, really important.  Really,  
9           it's important for the ratepayers, and also for our  
10          role of -- of being proper stewards of that.  So it's  
11          important.

12                               Item 371, I want to -- I am going to  
13          be voting yes on this but I -- I do just want to  
14          point out.  This is the second pilot in the last few  
15          months that we've agreed to allow to be terminated.  
16          I don't think that's a negative, I think that it's  
17          really important to see that we are carefully  
18          evaluating the pilots and the success.

19                               What lessons we can learn from them,  
20          and then as appropriate, having them terminate rather  
21          than lasting continually and that -- so this is  
22          appropriate.  I do, though, want to look a little bit  
23          more under the hood at all of the different ongoing  
24          pilots that have -- that are out there, which also  
25          include the REV demonstration projects.

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2 And understand a little bit more about  
3 what lessons we're learning, what dollars have been  
4 spent, what dollars may be spent, and where we're  
5 headed. And maybe make some -- have some discussion  
6 on what's been working well, what hasn't, what  
7 further direction does the Commission itself maybe  
8 have to give on some of these.

9 So I just point that out. And I thank  
10 Staff for working hard on that. Item 561, which is  
11 the next generation 911 -- 911 petition. I am going  
12 to be voting for that. However, I do just want to  
13 point out, while this is not -- this is about one  
14 operator being given approval here.

15 There is a lot that's happening in the  
16 next gen 911 space. And I know that our office and  
17 Homeland Security is working carefully on that.  
18 D.P.S. is part of the working group. This is really  
19 important, really important from an emergency  
20 management safety perspective, but also in terms of  
21 broadband expansion, et cetera.

22 There are Federal dollars that are out  
23 there, and there's ongoing national work that's being  
24 done. I would like us as a Commission to really have  
25 a deeper understanding of this and make sure that we

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2 are maximizing that, but also how it impacts access  
3 to broadband, access to 911 services and some of the  
4 lessons that we can be learning from that.

5 While Homeland Security may be our  
6 sister agency, and may have a more prominent role as  
7 it relates to emergency management. We have a  
8 prominent role as it -- as it -- as it relates to the  
9 911 and access to that for our ratepayers. So I want  
10 to just make sure we're on top of that. So thank you  
11 very much.

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.  
13 Commissioner Alesi?

14 COMMISSIONER ALESI: Thank you, Mr.  
15 Chairman. I will be supporting the agenda with the  
16 exception of Item 261; I will be recusing.

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.  
18 Commissioner Edwards?

19 COMMISSIONER EDWARDS: Yes, I don't  
20 have anything -- no questions on the consent agenda.  
21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.  
23 Commissioner Howard.

24 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: I have no  
25 questions on the consent agenda.

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2 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

3 Commissioner Valesky?

4 COMMISSIONER VALESKY: No questions.

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner

6 Maggiore?

7 COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: No questions.

8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Excellent. Thank  
10 you. Okay. My vote is in favor of the  
11 recommendations on the consent agenda. Commissioner  
12 Burman, how do you vote?

13 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner  
15 Alesi with the exception of Item 261?

16 COMMISSIONER ALESI: I vote yes with  
17 the -- I vote yes with the exception of 261, I  
18 recused myself.

19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

20 Commissioner Edwards?

21 COMMISSIONER EDWARDS: I vote yes.

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner

23 Howard?

24 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Yes.

25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner

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2 Valesky?

3 COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Yes.

4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Commissioner

5 Maggiore?

6 COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Excellent. Thank  
8 you. The items are approved and the recommendations  
9 are adopted. Now, I want to take this opportunity to  
10 thank Commissioner John Howard, for his leadership  
11 over the last seven months, guiding any organization  
12 through an evolving landscape marked by not only a  
13 pandemic -- a global pandemic, but a major hurricane,  
14 and several tropical -- several weather events,  
15 flooding, and other things that have affected the  
16 lives and livelihood of all New Yorkers is no small  
17 feat.

18 I want to thank you for your  
19 leadership through this time and your continued  
20 commitment to public service. And I want to thank  
21 you for your continued support as a Commissioner as I  
22 step into this role as Chair.

23 So I want to just take this  
24 opportunity to thank you for your service.

25 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Thank you very

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2 much, Mr. Chairman. Again, the best of luck to you  
3 and congratulations on your elevation as to Chair. I  
4 just want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow  
5 Commissioners who have been enormously supportive  
6 over these last months, and the Staff who has been  
7 patient and kind even when I ask dumb questions, and  
8 they will always be in my heart, and I look forward  
9 to serving out the balance of my term. So thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you. So I  
11 want to open the floor. I know a few other  
12 Commissioners have a few things to say.

13 COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Thank you,  
14 Chair. I'd like to first congratulate you,  
15 Commissioner Christian -- Chair Christian on your  
16 elevation to Chair. Along with Commissioner Valesky  
17 we join the Commission at the same time and I very  
18 much look forward to working with you in your new  
19 capacity going forward.

20 During the brief time we've been  
21 working together so far, I could say that I've  
22 learned from the questions that you ask either in  
23 these sessions or during our briefings or some of the  
24 other opportunities that we've had to work together.  
25 I'm struck by your commitment and your knowledge.

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2 I think you've become Chair at a  
3 momentous time in New York's history in terms of the  
4 many issues we are charged with confronting and I'm  
5 confident you will bring to the tasks qualities that  
6 will make you a great Chair.

7 I'd also like to commend my friend  
8 John Howard, for his service as Chair. I've had the  
9 privilege of working with John Howard in different  
10 capacities for more than a quarter of a century.

11 He was part of my introduction to  
12 energy policy back when we were both working in the  
13 Assembly in the mid-1990s and since then, we've  
14 worked together in the Attorney General's Office, the  
15 Governor's Office, and now here.

16 Based on that, I could say that New  
17 York is a better place because of John's public  
18 service and that this Commission will benefit because  
19 he will remain a Commissioner for nearly four more  
20 years.

21 In terms of John service as Chair, I  
22 could say that it very well may have been the most  
23 consequential seven months of anybody who has ever  
24 held the position.

25 To quote the -- the wizard Gandalf,

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2 "All we have to decide is what to do with the time  
3 that is given us." During the time given to John to  
4 serve as Chair, the P.S.C. approved the -- the  
5 selling of Indian Point, approved the largest  
6 settlement with utilities in history as a result of  
7 inadequate storm response, and established the  
8 precedent that the C.L.C.P.A. applies to all rate  
9 cases going forward.

10 To name just a few of the most  
11 historic milestones of John's tenure as Chair. So  
12 John, I look forward to your continued leadership  
13 from a seat one -- seat closer to me and I'm sure I  
14 speak for my fellow Commissioners in that respect.  
15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Thank you, John.

17 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: Thank you.

18 Commissioner Howard, I want to personally say thank  
19 you. I appreciated the diligent care and attention  
20 you paid to the Agency and Commission management  
21 parts of your job as Chair.

22 I thank you for recognizing the  
23 expertise that the Agency Staff bring to bear on  
24 economic consumer safety and environmental aspects of  
25 regulation.

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2 I am particularly grateful to the  
3 thoughtful outreach you made to each of us as  
4 Commissioners. You instilled in me a sense that you  
5 truly believed our voices matter and that our  
6 collaborative engagement as a Commission body can  
7 make a positive difference.

8 Chair Christian, you have big shoes to  
9 fill and I look forward to all of us working together  
10 as you lead the Commission, ensuring New York's  
11 energy system is reliable, resilient, and our energy  
12 regulation smartly evolves to meet the growing  
13 demands of our State with the consumer in mind.

14 I'm happy to be part of this team.  
15 And I look forward to continuing. Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER ALESI: Mr. Chairman, if  
17 I may?

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Please.

19 COMMISSIONER ALESI: Thank you. John,  
20 I just having this unusual opportunity of welcoming  
21 and wishing all the best to our new Chairman, and at  
22 the same time, looking forward to continuing to work  
23 with you in a capacity as a Commissioner.

24 You probably never thought about this,  
25 but when I was struggling my way through the Assembly

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2 many, many years ago, as a member of the minority, I  
3 would see you come and go with all of this capability  
4 and flair of somebody who was going someplace.

5 Now, we know where you're going.  
6 You're going to my office as I just found out because  
7 I have not been there for a year-and-a-half, so  
8 you're very welcome to it. And you're also very  
9 welcome to the cheese and crackers, which I keep in  
10 the lower left hand drawer. Help yourself.

11 It's always good to kid, but you've  
12 been a great friend to me since we've started working  
13 together on the Commission, and especially helping me  
14 out this summer as I was going through some travails  
15 with my health.

16 You're just terrific and very  
17 accommodating and that speaks to the kind of person  
18 that you are. So I look forward to continue working  
19 with you and wish you all the best.

20 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER EDWARDS: All right.

22 Chair Christian, I just want to welcome you and  
23 looking forward to working with you. I think your  
24 experience, especially on the environmental front and  
25 community advocate is going to serve us all well and

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2 looking forward to your tenure.

3 I happen to come on the Commission  
4 with John Howard. I considered him a friend. He's  
5 an ultimate professional and really a unifier, and I  
6 appreciate the work that he has done, and will  
7 continue to do, but I just want to correct one thing.  
8 Commissioner Maggiore, you're sitting in my seat so I  
9 sit in that.

10 So -- so because I am here today does  
11 not mean that, you know, I don't know where is your  
12 chair, but that is my chair that you are sitting, so  
13 shift over because I will be sitting next to  
14 Commissioner Howard. Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER VALESKY: And finally --  
17 first of all, Chair Christian, congratulations on  
18 your appointment, look forward to working closely  
19 with you as we have been for these months as  
20 Commissioner Maggiore indicated.

21 The three of us share something in  
22 common and that we all are the newest members of --  
23 of the Commission and -- and that is a bond that the  
24 three -- the three of us will have with each other.

25 To John Howard and also to John

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2 Maggiore and Jim Alesi, I am enjoying that this  
3 little trip down a legislative memory lane. I too,  
4 spent much time there and certainly as many -- know I  
5 had the distinguished privilege of serving 14 years  
6 as a member of the State Senate.

7 But long before that, back to the  
8 1990s, Commissioner Maggiore, I was also in the  
9 Assembly and that's where I first met you, John.  
10 John Howard at that time was the top adviser to then  
11 Chairman of the Assembly Energy Committee, Paul Tonko  
12 and I can honestly say, John, that I have learned  
13 more about energy policy from you than from anyone  
14 else, and I will always remember and appreciate that.

15 The other thing I want to say in terms  
16 of your term as Chair of the P.S.C., although it may  
17 have been relatively short, I think, seven months or  
18 something -- something like that.

19 Certainly, as Commissioner Maggiore  
20 indicated, a lot of really significant major events  
21 happened in a relatively small and short period of  
22 time and I won't review them, but what I -- what I do  
23 want to add is, in your time as chair, whether it was  
24 here at a chairing session or in our private  
25 conversations among the two of us, there was never a

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2 day that went by that you didn't have the impact of  
3 whatever we do on ratepayers at the forefront of your  
4 mind.

5 And I think that as a Chair, speaks  
6 volumes to your leadership. I think the ratepayers  
7 of this State have benefited tremendously from your  
8 leadership as Chair of the P.S.C., and I think they  
9 will continue to benefit tremendously by your  
10 decision to continuing to serve with each and every  
11 one of us on this Commission going forward throughout  
12 your term.

13 So John, thank you and congratulations  
14 for that.

15 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Thank you,  
16 David.

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN: All right. Thank  
18 you Commissioners. And so I look to you, Secretary  
19 Phillips, please be so kind as to read the resolution  
20 we prepared for the record.

21 SECRETARY PHILLIPS: Okay. The  
22 resolution reads as follows. Whereas John B. Howard  
23 has served the citizens of New York State as chair of  
24 the Public Service Commission and Chief Executive  
25 Officer of the Department of Public Service from

1                   10-7-2021    -    Monthly Meeting  
2           February through September 2021, with great  
3           distinction and will continue to serve as  
4           Commissioner, a role he has had since July 2019.

5                   And whereas Commissioner Howard has  
6           put his extensive expertise to work for New Yorkers  
7           over the course of four decades of State service  
8           spanning the legislative and executive branches,  
9           including leadership roles at NYPA, the New York  
10          State Consumer Protection Board, Executive Chamber,  
11          Office of the Attorney General, and New York State  
12          Assembly.

13                   And whereas the Commission under his  
14          leadership has issued 483 orders, including dec --  
15          decisions that expanded the Commission's energy  
16          affordability programs for low-income customers, and  
17          adopted settlements with utilities totaling near --  
18          nearly \$190 million in ratepay -- ratepayer benefits  
19          to address emergency preparedness and response.

20                   And whereas Commissioner Howard has  
21          generously shared his wisdom, good humor, and  
22          leadership with his colleagues on the Commission, and  
23          with the Staff of the Department, and whereas  
24          Commissioner Howard has worked tirelessly for the  
25          benefit of the State's utility ratepayers it is

1                   10-7-2021    -    Monthly Meeting  
2           resolved that the New York State Public Service  
3           Commission expresses its deepest appreciation to  
4           Commissioner Howard for his leadership of this agency  
5           and his faithful service to the citizens of New York  
6           State, as demonstrated by his unwavering commitment  
7           to ensure safe, secure and reliable access to  
8           electric, gas, steam, telecommunications, and water  
9           services for all of New York's residential and  
10          business customers.  Thank you.

11                           CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN:  Thank you,  
12          Secretary Phillips.  All right.  Is there anything  
13          else further to come before us today?

14                           SECRETARY PHILLIPS:  Oh, there's no --  
15          sorry, there is nothing further.

16                           CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN:  Thank you,  
17          Secretary.  All right.  And with that, we adjourn.  
18          Thank you, everyone.

19                           THE REPORTER:  Okay.  We're off the  
20          record.

21   (Off the record, 12:02 p.m.)

22   (The proceeding concluded.)

23

24

25

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2 STATE OF NEW YORK

3 I, JANET WALLRAVIN, do hereby certify that the foregoing  
4 was reported by me, in the cause, at the time and place,  
5 as stated in the caption hereto, at Page 1 hereof; that  
6 the foregoing typewritten transcription consisting of  
7 pages 1 through 78, is a true record of all proceedings  
8 had at the hearing.

9 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto  
10 subscribed my name, this the 12th day of October, 2021.

11

12

13 JANET WALLRAVIN, Reporter

14

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