



**For Immediate Release:** 06/11/20

John B. Rhodes, Chair

**Contact:**

James Denn | James.Denn@dps.ny.gov | (518) 474-7080

<http://www.dps.ny.gov>

<http://twitter.com/NYSDPS>

**20051/20-M-0231**

## **PSC Approves Plan to Help Con Edison's Low-Income Customers**

### ***Emergency Summer 2020 Cooling Bill Relief Program Provides Bill Credits to Low-Income Bill Discount Program Customers in NYC and Westchester County***

#### ***Financial Support Totaling Up to \$70.56 Million Over Next Four Months***

**ALBANY** — The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) today approved an emergency cooling bill relief program for electric customers enrolled in Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc.'s (Con Edison) low-income bill discount program for the months of June through September.

“As the COVID crisis continues into the heat of summer, public health requires ensuring that our most vulnerable citizens in our worst-affected areas have the ability to use air-conditioners during these summer months,” **said Commission Chair John B. Rhodes.** “Creating this emergency relief program will help more than 400,000 customers keep safe this summer while not having to worry about the cost of running much needed air conditioners.”

Con Edison has approximately 441,000 electric customers in New York City and Westchester currently enrolled in the low-income bill discount program, with 9 out of 10 customers already receiving a \$13 monthly discount. The emergency summer cooling credit will add up to \$40 a month in relief, which, for most customers, is more than double the size of the current low-income program bill discount.

The Commission's action is in response to a petition filed May 11, 2020 by New York City that requested emergency financial support for Con Edison's electric low-income bill discount program customers to remove financial impediments of using air conditioning during the months of June through September due to the forecasted limited availability of public facilities this summer, such as cooling centers and public pools, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting social distancing measures. The population density of New York City makes these public facilities crucial during the hot summer months.

Today's decision will require Con Edison to engage in aggressive outreach with the low-income bill discount program customers to ensure the customers are aware of the emergency summer cooling credit.

The decision reached today by the Commission, included the following:

**Budget for Emergency Relief:** Rather than approving a set monthly credit, the Commission approved a total relief budget of \$70.56 million, with budgets of \$15 million, \$18 million, \$18 million and \$19.56 million for the four months, respectively. These monthly caps are based on the average bills for the low-income bill discount program customers from the previous three years and estimated increases in eligible customers.

**Eligibility for Credit:** The Commission decided to provide the relief to all electric customers who are enrolled in the low-income bill discount program, including those in Westchester, which also has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Customers must be enrolled in the program by the 10th of the month to receive the credit for that month. Customers will continue to receive the emergency summer cooling credit as long as they are enrolled in the low-income bill discount program.

**Cost Recovery:** Con Edison will recover the costs of the emergency relief over a five-year period. When Con Edison's rates are next reset, the unrecovered balance would be rolled into base rates to be recovered over the remaining three years. Spreading recovery over five years will help to mitigate bill impacts for Con Edison's customers.

Today's decision may be obtained by going to the Commission Documents section of the Commission's Web site at [www.dps.ny.gov](http://www.dps.ny.gov) and entering Case Number 20-M-0231 in the input box labeled "Search for Case/Matter Number". Commission documents may also be obtained from the Commission's Files Office, 14th floor, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500). If you have difficulty understanding English, please call us at 1-800-342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this press release.