



## NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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May 7, 2019

President Joseph L. Fiordaliso  
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities  
44 South Clinton Ave., 7th Floor  
Trenton, NJ 08625

### **Re: Rockland Electric Rate Increase**

Dear President Fiordaliso:

I wholly agree with the NJ Division of the Rate Counsel's Consumer Bill of Rights; that all consumers must have access to reliable, safe, and affordable energy. Unfortunately, it appears Rockland Electric does not agree. Their proposed rate hike, poor customer service, and inadequate storm response make that evident.

The citizens served by Rockland Electric deserve affordable energy, and I urge the Board of Public Utilities to consider Rockland's poor service before making a decision on their proposed 9.6 percent rate hike, which would force the typical customer to pay \$19.20 more per month.

The CEO claims the increase will meet the needs of the marketplace where customers have more control and expect a more reliable system. Considering this is the exact rationale used for a 2018 New York rate increase, I am skeptical of the true need. More dubious, Rockland Electric's initial reason for the increase is higher customer satisfaction. I believe customers would be more satisfied by simply receiving higher quality service without a rate increase.

I have introduced a bill (A-3736) that addresses issues caused by public utility franchises. This bill would require the BPU to deny approval of a franchise if the public utility cannot provide adequate service, permit revocation of the franchise if they are not performing as agreed to, and increase penalties for violations. This is the right direction to ensure customers receive high quality service from their public utilities that they expect and deserve.

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I am happy to work with BPU on this matter as needed, especially as a member of the Assembly Telecommunications and Utilities Committee. I am hoping Rate Counsel will intervene as well. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher P. DePhillips". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Christopher P. DePhillips  
Assemblyman, 40<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

Cc: Mary-Anna Holden  
Dianne Solomon  
Upendra Chivukula  
Bob Gordon