

STATE OF NEW YORK

6922

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 24, 2017

Introduced by M. of A. BRONSON -- read once and referred to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to hearings following major power outages

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The public service law is amended by adding a new section
2 66-o to read as follows:

3 § 66-o. Hearings. 1. Following any major power outage, the commission
4 shall, within ninety days, schedule at least one public statement hear-
5 ing in each affected county or in each affected city with a population
6 of one hundred fifty thousand or more or in each affected borough in the
7 city of New York, provided that such hearing has been requested via a
8 formal resolution adopted by the county legislature or board of supervi-
9 sors in such affected county or by the city council in such affected
10 cities with a population of one hundred fifty thousand or more and that
11 such resolution has been transmitted to the chairperson of the public
12 service commission by electronic or written communication. The affected
13 counties may agree amongst themselves to fewer public statement hearings
14 provided that the location or locations of such hearing or hearings are
15 conveniently located within the geographic area affected by the major
16 power outage and easily accessible for customers. Such an agreement
17 among the affected counties must be transmitted to the chairperson of
18 the commission.

19 2. "Major power outage" shall be defined as any outage within a utili-
20 ty service territory that leaves five percent or more of customers with-
21 out power for at least seventy-two consecutive hours following the event
22 that caused the outage.

23 3. For the purposes of providing notice and soliciting public
24 comments, at least thirty days prior to the public statement hearing or
25 hearings required in subdivision one of this section, the commission

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 shall provide notice or electronic notice: (a) to each county and muni-
2 cipality served by said electric corporation located in the area
3 affected by the major power outage; (b) to the speaker of the assembly,
4 the temporary president of the senate, the chairperson of the senate
5 energy and telecommunications committee, the chairperson of the assembly
6 energy committee, and each member of the state legislature that repres-
7 ents an area where service was affected by the major power outage; (c)
8 by publication once in each week for four successive weeks in a newspa-
9 per and on the web site of a newspaper that has general circulation in
10 the geographic area affected by the major power outage located within
11 the service territory of said electric corporation; and (d) by publica-
12 tion on the commission's website.

13 4. A member or members of the commission or department of public
14 service senior staff, designated by the chairperson of the commission,
15 shall be present in person at the public statement hearings required by
16 subdivision one of this section and shall begin with a presentation on
17 data collected during the recent outage, including information on resto-
18 ration times in the affected county or city, customer complaints and
19 other data which the commission or its designee may deem appropriate.
20 The commission members or their designees shall then solicit public
21 comment from residential and commercial customers from the affected
22 county or city with a population of one hundred fifty thousand or more
23 or borough in the city of New York. Such testimony shall be limited to:

24 (a) Customer feedback on their experience during the recent outage,
25 including issues related to power restoration, restoration times and
26 service quality;

27 (b) Suggestions for changes in commission policy in the affected
28 service territory which, in the customer's view would lead to better
29 service quality;

30 (c) Communication protocols between a company and customers during an
31 outage and how such protocols may be improved; and

32 (d) Any additional topics of information that the commission may
33 determine are necessary and appropriate.

34 5. Within one hundred twenty days of the conclusion of such public
35 statement hearing, the commission shall publish on its website a report
36 summarizing the events of the public statement hearing and any recom-
37 ended policy changes that it may have initiated. Such report shall also
38 be transmitted to the temporary president of the senate, the speaker of
39 the assembly, the chairperson of the senate energy and telecommuni-
40 cations committee, the chairperson of the assembly energy committee,
41 each member of the legislature whose district lies in whole or in part
42 in the affected county, the county executive or administrator and the
43 chairperson of the county legislature or board of supervisors and the
44 mayor of any city with a population of one hundred fifty thousand or
45 more that was the subject of such hearing.

46 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.