

STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Case 06-E-0894 - Proceeding on Motion of the
Commission to Investigate the Electric Power
Outages in Consolidated Edison Company of
New York, Inc.'s Long Island City Network.

La Guardia Community College
Main Stage Theater
81-10 Thomson Avenue
Long Island City, New York

August 10, 2006
7:00 p.m.

BEFORE: ROBERT E. CURRY, Commissioner

GERALD L. LYNCH,
Administrative Law Judge

1 JUDGE LYNCH: Good evening, ladies and
2 Gentlemen. I call this hearing to order. This is
3 a hearing that's part of a Department of Public
4 Service investigation of the power outages that
5 began on July 17, 2006 in Con Edison's Long Island
6 City electric network. The matter is captioned as
7 case 06-E-0894.

8 My name is Gerald L. Lynch and I am an
9 Administrative Law Judge with the New York State
10 Public Service Commission, and holding hearings like
11 this one tonight is part of my day-to-day
12 responsibilities. Also here tonight is Commissioner
13 Robert E. Curry, Jr., who is one of the five members
14 of the Public Service Commission.

15 Welcome, Commissioner.

16 COMMISSIONER CURRY: Thank you. I just want
17 to thank you all for coming here tonight. I know you
18 have had a very difficult time of it going through
19 the outages. We at the Commission are going to work
20 tirelessly and thoroughly, leaving no stone unturned,
21 to find out what transpired and try to take as clear
22 and productive a view of what Con Ed did and how they
23 can do it better as we possibly again.

24 Thanks very much for coming. I look forward

1 to listening to your comments. I am not in a
2 position to respond to them. Whatever comes out of
3 this effort is going to come before the Commission as
4 something we have to make a decision, the judge makes
5 a decision on something. I am not in a position to
6 comment at this time. Thank you.

7 JUDGE LYNCH: Let me take a minute to say
8 that the proceeding was started on July 26th, which
9 was after the outage on the 17th, and the
10 investigation is supposed to cover a number of areas
11 which I would like to summarize for you.

12 One, the circumstances surrounding the power
13 outage. Two, the events that lead to the failure of
14 numerous primary voltage feeders and the subsequent
15 customer outages. Con Ed's response, communications
16 and restoration efforts. Four, the need for changes
17 in Con Edison's practices and procedures to avoid
18 failures and outages in the future. And five, the
19 costs incurred by Con Edison related to the failure
20 and outages.

21 The department will be gathering facts as
22 part of its investigation and one way, only one way,
23 to gather those facts is to allow for comment by
24 those who are affected. In particular, those

1 affected can provide comments in response to the six
2 questions. There is a handout, there are several
3 handouts tonight. Both of the handouts have the
4 questions on them. The one that you can fill out the
5 form if you decide not to speak, and also on the one
6 that announces the hearings and on the back tells you
7 the different ways you can comment.

8 But it's how were you affected? Did you get
9 timely and accurate information from Con Edison? Did
10 you attempt to contact the company and did you get
11 what you were requesting? What are your overall
12 impressions of the company and its response to the
13 outages? And the reasons for your impressions. What
14 actions do you recommend that Con Edison should or
15 should not have taken before, during and after the
16 outages? And what actions do you recommend the
17 Commission take in light of all we know about these
18 events.

19 I went through those questions quickly only
20 because I know they are written down for you and you
21 had a chance to pick them up. Comments that don't
22 concern the outage and the recovery are not being
23 solicited at this time. Also, some of you probably
24 saw if you came in there is a Con Edison truck

1 outside that's available to take claims. At least
2 there was when I came back from dinner about an hour
3 ago. I believe it's still there.

4 Now, very quickly. There are six ways you
5 can comment. Coming to a hearing like tonight is one
6 of them. You can write the Secretary. You can
7 e-mail the department in one of two ways. There is a
8 toll free number that you can call. Again, all those
9 addresses and phone numbers are on the handout. If
10 you don't have the handout now, before you leave you
11 can pick one up.

12 Many of you are here to speak tonight. Let
13 me quickly review the procedures and we will get
14 started. First, when you arrive, if you haven't
15 already done so and you want to make a statement,
16 there's a small card, please fill it out. It has the
17 name, your address, and I will only be calling the
18 names out. It's been requested at some of the prior
19 hearings that I not state on the record the
20 addresses, I think because of concern for personal
21 safety. Fill out the card, hand it to one of the
22 staff people, and make sure it gets up to me.

23 At this point I have got about 14 people who
24 have signed up to speak. When your name is called,

1 please come up to one of the two microphones,
2 whichever is most convenient for you. Please speak
3 slowly and clearly into the microphone. Many of us
4 who come to a hearing like this are not public
5 speakers and we tend to go fast, and I ask that you
6 try to speak slowly. We have a court stenographer
7 here who, if you speak clearly and slowly, will be
8 able to take down verbatim what you have to say.
9 That's a very important part of the investigation.

10 The hearing will continue at least one hour
11 and thereafter as long as necessary to hear as many
12 people as possible. We have to leave the building by
13 10:00 p.m. I don't see any problem in concluding the
14 hearing by ten. We will have to see what develops
15 during the evening, but please be as succinct as
16 possible when you come to the microphone so that
17 everyone can be heard.

18 I ask you finally to please be courteous to
19 all speakers whether or not you agree with them.
20 This is America. Finally, let me say: Does anybody
21 have any questions about anything that I just went
22 through? I don't see any hands, so at this point I
23 am going to call the first speaker. And let me in
24 advance apologize. I reviewed the cards already and

1 I know that I will struggle either with your name or
2 sometimes with the pronunciation, so please bear with
3 me.

4 The first speaker is Chiara Wimberly. I'll
5 put that aside for a moment. The second person who
6 signed up to speak tonight is Ann Marie Carlsen.
7 Welcome to our hearing.

8 MS. CARLSEN: Thank you. I don't know
9 really if I am qualified because I wasn't really
10 affected by this last blackout, but I was affected by
11 the one a few years ago, and because of that I have
12 been worried for the longest time about what's going
13 to happen when the next one occurs, because in my
14 neighborhood alone on Broadway, between 30th and 31st
15 Street--Broadway and 31st Avenue, there is at least
16 11 or 12 one-family homes that have been torn down
17 and replaced by luxury apartments.

18 Now, all these people are moving in there
19 have air conditioners and computers, and it's taking
20 much more electrical power than Con Edison is capable
21 of giving at this time. Plus the fact that under the
22 L, between Broadway and 31st Avenue, there is a gas
23 station that has been torn down and they are talking
24 about building ten three-family homes, plus across

1 the street they are going to build an 85 apartment
2 condominium.

3 Now, where is all this electric power coming
4 from? I would like to know who is it that issues
5 these building permits without investigating? That's
6 it.

7 (Applause)

8 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. Has Chiara
9 returned to the room? Welcome.

10 MS. WIMBERLY: I am a resident of Sunnyside
11 and have been so for almost 30 years, and I just
12 wanted to come here today and tell you that it was
13 horrible to be without power for seven days. Bathing
14 in ice cold water and laying in sweat, hearing sirens
15 passing by, was too much to handle.

16 And I don't think that much was done to
17 prevent it initially. And it's very disturbing that
18 there have been no answers and a total lack of
19 communication and doesn't really seem as though it's
20 been a priority.

21 And since the power was technically
22 restored, which it has not been restored, we are on a
23 generator, I have not seen any Con Edison trucks in
24 my neighborhood, which leads me to believe that

1 nothing is being done and nothing was done and
2 nothing will be done.

3 And it's very upsetting for someone who
4 takes pride in their neighborhood and loves their
5 neighborhood who is now thinking of leaving. And
6 it's very upsetting, and I just wanted to share that.

7 (Applause)

8 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much. The next
9 speaker this evening is Ann Eagan.

10 MS. EAGAN: Yes. I don't see any point in
11 telling you my war stories about sweating and taking
12 cold showers and all that sort of thing. There is
13 enough people who can tell you that.

14 I believe the problem here is Con Ed, and I
15 think that's what we--not you all, because you don't
16 seem to have the power, but I think we as the
17 ratepayers and people who live in the city really
18 need to get rid of Con Ed. This is a corporation
19 that makes money on us and cannot deliver service.

20 And this is not the first time it happened.
21 And they simply do not maintain the underground part
22 that we can't even see, can't even check it out. You
23 all don't check it ever. I am sure you don't go down
24 there and see what kind of wire and so forth, what

1 kind of cables.

2 So, that's the problem. This is going to
3 go on and on. As the woman mentioned, the building,
4 the increase, and so forth. How are they going to
5 take care of that? They can't take care of what we
6 had.

7 So, I think we need to have a town meeting.
8 I really have to set one up if people want to see me
9 here afterwards. We are from Power for the People,
10 so we will be having regularly, at least monthly if
11 not more frequently, town meetings on how we can
12 develop--it's done all over the country and state--a
13 municipal utility service, not a private corporation.

14 And we can next start talking about wind
15 power, solar power, which we are far behind the rest
16 of the world in this city. It's really a disgrace.
17 Thank you.

18 (Applause)

19 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much. The next
20 speaker is Catherine DeCicco.

21 MS. DECICCO: There is nothing I could add
22 more to what Ann Marie and she said too. We come
23 from a neighborhood thank God that everything was all
24 right with us, and we didn't suffer anything, no loss

1 of food or anything, but there is nothing else I
2 could add to it. And we are very concerned about all
3 these buildings that are going up and there is not
4 going to be enough power for everything. That's
5 about all I could add to it.

6 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you.

7 (Applause)

8 For those people that it's not inconvenient,
9 I would appreciate though if you could come up to the
10 microphone. I could hear you fine but I am wondering
11 if the people behind you could. So, for all the
12 people who can, if they can come up to the mike, that
13 would be terrific.

14 The next speaker is Paul Simon. Welcome.

15 MR. SIMON: I live on 40th Street off Queens
16 Boulevard and my building was built in 1949. Now in
17 1949, I am not even talking about new buildings being
18 built, but in 1949 we didn't have microwaves. We
19 didn't have computers. We didn't have air
20 conditioners. But we have the same power lines
21 coming into the building. They've never been changed
22 and when they are changed they put them into the same
23 lines.

24 And more television sets are being used

1 today and air conditioners, you see them selling like
2 crazy, and everybody's got it.

3 How can you expect to maintain service with
4 the service that came in 1950? I don't understand
5 it. I am not a computer engineer, but I think if you
6 have this line coming in and now this line has six
7 air conditioners on it and six microwaves and
8 computers and everything else, it's drawing more
9 power and it's got to blow sooner or later. And when
10 they come back and replace it with the same wires, I
11 don't see where the improvement is.

12 I think Con Ed, as a private company, should
13 be held responsible, just like the citizens are held
14 responsible. If we get a parking ticket and the
15 ticket is \$115 we feel it, it hurts. Con Ed when
16 they kill a horse, they should be fined \$100,000, or
17 they kill a dog, there should be a set fine
18 automatically and then I think they would check the
19 wires a little more carefully.

20 (Applause)

21 JUDGE LYNCH: At this point we have 18
22 people signed up to speak including those who have
23 already spoken. The next speaker is I will say
24 Chryse Glackin. I apologize if I'm mispronouncing

1 your name.

2 MS. GLACKIN: You did pretty good. My name
3 is Chryse Glackin. I live on 41st Street and
4 Sunnyside. We were without power for almost five
5 days. We had one light bulb, which was equivalent
6 for about 20 campers.

7 I mean the same as everyone else. We were
8 in the middle of a heat wave. It was unbearable.
9 So, we suffered from that perspective. We lost food.
10 But nothing unusual compared to other people who had
11 no elevators, no hot water, and such.

12 But I wanted to get on the record that I am
13 very concerned about energy deregulation, and I think
14 that Con Edison had the Public Service Commission
15 overseeing it or looking into it because when
16 companies are private they answer to their
17 shareholders before they answer to their
18 constituents, the people they are supposed to serve.

19 We pay a very high rate for electrical
20 power, so it's not like we are getting something for
21 nothing, and it's Con Edison's responsibility to keep
22 that service up and running. Just like if we don't
23 pay our bills they disconnect us, so we should have
24 that same right to demand Con Ed maintain and develop

1 an infrastructure that is going to be guaranteed to
2 serve the people.

3 If it's not going to be, then it cannot be
4 our utility company. We need a state run people's
5 utility company where we control the resources,
6 because this is not a privilege, electricity is not a
7 privilege. Power is a right. It's part of our way
8 of life today. It's the way we live, the way we
9 work. It represents the way we operate in the United
10 States.

11 So, for Con Ed to allow something like this
12 to happen--and I have to say I feel very
13 discriminated against because Sunnyside and Astoria
14 and Long Island City largely are working class and
15 immigrant areas, and I really feel it had a lot to do
16 with the demographics, okay, because I don't think
17 this would have been pulled on Sutton Place or
18 Beekman in Manhattan.

19 (Applause)

20 Also, I think it was a disgrace that when
21 Con Ed was asked what's going on here they didn't
22 know. If Con Ed doesn't know what's wrong with those
23 power lines, who does? That is totally inexcusable,
24 it's lame, and they should be ashamed of themselves,

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1 as ashamed as the \$3 rebate they offered us for the
2 suffering that we endured.

3 There used to be a Citizens Utility Board
4 that was basically annihilated by Governor Pataki by
5 cutting the funds because it was publically funded.
6 I think it needs to be resurrected because I think
7 Con Ed and the Public Service Commission need to
8 answer to us.

9 I want that on the public record. And that
10 Con Ed should be as responsible to its customers as
11 it is to its shareholders. Thank you.

12 (Applause)

13 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much for coming
14 and for making your comment. The next speaker is
15 Molly Charboneau. Welcome.

16 MS. CHARBONEAU: Thank you. I live in
17 Sunnyside Towers, which is 150 apartments, 400
18 people, and we had no or low power for seven days.
19 Con Ed put us on a generator and we are still on it.
20 I am in the same building as Chiara.

21 During all that time we basically had to
22 fend for ourselves, we had to see to the elderly in
23 the building who couldn't get up and down because the
24 elevators were out. See that they got food,

1 relocated them with their families.

2 We had to walk up and down six flights of
3 stairs and hallways and the streets carrying
4 flashlights. This included little children.

5 We had no AC, no refrigerators, no hot
6 water. We spent a lot of money eating out. We still
7 have not gotten any answers from Con Edison. There
8 was no sign of the mayor or city services for days
9 until the community really spoke up and insisted that
10 the mayor come.

11 We have to ask where was the Public Service
12 Commission when the lights went out? What about the
13 infrastructure? I have to echo what some of the
14 other speakers said. Why hasn't this been looked at
15 until this very large chunk of the city went without
16 power?

17 In my neighborhood we started a Power for
18 the People petition campaign. We now have hundreds
19 of people from Sunnyside, Woodside, Astoria and Long
20 Island City, who signed our petition and we expect to
21 have hundreds more before we are through. This is
22 what our communities want and need in response to the
23 power outage.

24 Number one, we need compensation for losses,

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1 expenses and lost wages from the outage. There were
2 workers who were out of work for a week because they
3 worked in businesses that were closed. They get no
4 paycheck for that. What about that? There has to be
5 compensation over and above Con Ed's claim form for
6 spoiled food.

7 Number two, free power for at least the
8 length of time the outage lasted and no charge for
9 brownout power. I mean these brown light bulbs that
10 we described, everybody is saying they expect us to
11 pay for those?

12 Number three, you need a community fact
13 finding investigation into the power outage, its
14 causes, impact on the communities and plans to
15 prevent future outages.

16 We need to have a community voice in this
17 process because I think we have lost faith in those
18 who are supposed to be looking into this.

19 Number four, a first alert to the community
20 as soon as power problems occur. In Chicago when
21 they had many elderly who died in the heat wave years
22 ago, they now have some sort of a first response that
23 looks into the elderly. If they have that in Chicago
24 we should have that in New York for everybody, not

1 wait for a week while we are there.

2 I note for the record the lights in the
3 auditorium just went out.

4 JUDGE LYNCH: Actually the lights off stage
5 are on over here.

6 MS. CHARBONEAU: The lights are back on.
7 So, I just want to reiterate if they can have the
8 first alert in Chicago set up I think we can have it
9 here in New York. As soon as there's a sign of a
10 problem with our wiring, there should be a
11 communication out to the community.

12 We had to look out our window and watch
13 stores go dark and light up and dark and have no idea
14 what's going on.

15 Number five, you need to have a community
16 civilian review board of Con Ed's emergency response.
17 If the police department reviews what they do in the
18 community, Con Ed should be too. This is
19 unacceptable.

20 Say it again. We had no attention until we
21 raised our voices. We have hundreds of people sign
22 on to our demands, we expect to have hundreds more
23 and we will keep raising our voices until the power
24 problems in our community are fixed. Thank you.

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1 (Applause)

2 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much. Looks
3 like the last name is Wells. Could you state your
4 name.

5 MR. WELLS: Thomas Mills. Okay, first of
6 all, I would like to say it's disrespectful before
7 the meeting not to have a Pledge of Allegiance to the
8 flag. That's disrespectful not to have the Pledge of
9 Allegiance for the flag, any meeting, number one.

10 Number two, you have in the paper here
11 information Con Edison is supposed to give you. You
12 pick up the phone, you call up, busy, nobody answers.
13 You call up again. We don't know what's going on.

14 There is a program on the radio and
15 television, a lady gets on there every day, Con
16 Edison has spent \$83 billion to improve services for
17 the people. Four years in a row she is saying this
18 and we have been having blackouts.

19 This is ridiculous. You talk about workers.
20 I live in Woodside. I go all over the neighborhood.
21 And I will tell you something: You go down the
22 block, you see a manhole, one person in a manhole, 17
23 people watching them. Rest of them sitting on the
24 corner having coffee. I am serious.

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1 I went all the way down where the blackout
2 was even, picking up the food, all sitting around
3 waiting for someone to tell them what they have to
4 do. I went today, trucks over there. Nobody knew
5 what to do. Waiting for someone to come and tell us.

6 Stupidity is no excuse for ignorance.
7 That's the way I look at it. Thank you.

8 (Applause)

9 JUDGE LYNCH: The next speaker is Alyssa
10 Bonilla.

11 MS. BONILLA: Hi. Thank you for giving me
12 the opportunity to speak tonight. My name is Alyssa.
13 I am a resident of Sunnyside. I am one of the lucky
14 ones. I had the barest thread of power throughout
15 the crisis in one outlet in one room of my apartment.
16 So, technically I don't know if I am even being
17 counted as a customer who lost power.

18 But the suffering I experienced from laying
19 awake each night in my dark stifling apartment
20 listening to the sounds of ambulance, fire engines
21 and police cars, attending to people in acute
22 distress, did not compare with the humiliation of
23 having my suffering and the suffering of neighbors
24 underestimated and underappreciated.

1 As a result of the power outage in northwest
2 Queens, I felt utterly and completely abandoned by my
3 city government and by the public officials who are
4 entrusted with safeguarding my community's welfare.
5 As a result of the outage, I received the clear
6 message that my community is not valued.

7 On the first day I saw a news report that
8 said only 1800 people in Astoria were affected by the
9 outage. In my building alone there are 160
10 apartments with about 500 people. Block after block
11 of similar six-story apartment buildings were in
12 complete darkness.

13 From the first day it was clear Sunnyside
14 was in crisis, but even worse, that help was not on
15 the way. The New York Times reported hours before
16 the outage after multiple feeder cables had gone down
17 that Con Edison was faced with a choice to cut all
18 the power to 400,000 people or to try to run the
19 network on cables that remained.

20 We all know this strategy failed, yet it
21 failed for only 100,000 people. How did the other
22 300,000 people escape trouble? I don't understand
23 this and have not gotten any answers. Last week
24 parts of Astoria lost power for a second time and the

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1 news reported that a crisis was nearly averted in
2 midtown Manhattan.

3 From my desk at work I heard vans with loud
4 speakers going through the streets asking people to
5 conserve power, but no vans ever came to Sunnyside.
6 No ice trucks bringing relief ever came to Sunnyside.
7 The mayor never came to Sunnyside. The city and Con
8 Edison have shown us that all neighborhoods are not
9 equal and that public service is not equal.

10 It has forced the people of northwest Queens
11 to wonder if this is because of our community having
12 large numbers of working class people, the working
13 poor and new immigrants. The people of northwest
14 Queens are among the last to receive upgrades to our
15 electrical infrastructure and we are the first to
16 fall in a crisis.

17 It would have been infinitely more just,
18 more fair and more compassionate for larger areas to
19 have gone without power for one or two days than to
20 permit as acceptable the extent of suffering we have
21 been forced to endure.

22 (Applause)

23 The amounts of money allotted to reimburse
24 customers for spoiled food did not touch the losses

1 our community has experienced due to increased
2 expenses, lost business income, lost wages and human
3 pain. Under these circumstances there is no moral or
4 ethical way for Con Edison to justify the
5 distribution of dividends to shareholders when there
6 are people whose essential needs are dependent on
7 67-year-old cables.

8 Every single shareholder who benefited from
9 dividends during these past decades of infrastructure
10 neglect is in some part responsible for the suffering
11 we have experienced.

12 The Commission has asked us for
13 recommendations for future action. I suggest that
14 Con Edison immediately poll all its customers so they
15 can get an accurate count of how many living and
16 breathing human beings are attached to each account,
17 and further ascertain who may be at greater risk in a
18 power crisis, like the elderly and disabled.

19 As a result of the power outage, the
20 citizens of northwest Queens have been forced to
21 examine our own patterns of energy consumption and
22 must accept some responsibility for our behaviors.

23 Likewise, I call upon the members of the
24 Public Service Commission to examine their own

1 conscience and ask themselves in what ways they may
2 have contributed to the crisis that occurred.

3 I hope that we will all guard our individual
4 responsibilities in the light of the highest possible
5 level of decency and ethics and vow to do our parts
6 to prevent the suffering that has occurred from ever
7 happening again. Thank you.

8 (Applause)

9 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much. The next
10 speaker is Funda Ulutors.

11 MS. ULUTORS: As you said, I am Funda
12 Ulutors and I live in 51st Street, Woodside. We
13 didn't have power for one week. One full day, no
14 power was to continue. After that we had little bit
15 tiny power.

16 Whether you accept that as outage or not it
17 was for us because we didn't able to use T.V., AC,
18 computer, phone or electrical appliances. No hot
19 water, no elevator. Throw away everything in the
20 freezer and refrigerator. After ten days Con Edison
21 gave generator for us, which was removed today and,
22 again, four hours we did not have any electric today.

23 Result of that we very short notice last
24 night saw a sign generator is going to remove today.

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1 Expect outage between 10 and 8 o'clock. They gave us
2 back at 2 o'clock but four hour no electricity again.
3 Again, we would throw ice creams to the garbage
4 again.

5 My problem with all the unfortunate events
6 first couple days did not see any Con Edison's cars
7 around. I believe they were actually busy giving
8 wrong information to the public. Actually not just
9 Con Edison. Did not see any government
10 representatives around our neighborhood. Nobody
11 knock on doors, nobody provide water or food.

12 We had traffic officers on the street after
13 one week. I myself and children almost got hit by
14 the car. I was trying to be police officer. He did
15 not listen to me. I guess he did not recognize my
16 authority.

17 Finally, after politicians got involved five
18 days later I believe we start seeing Con Ed cars over
19 the freeways. I seen so many Con Edison cars I have
20 never seen before. I tried to call Con Edison. Only
21 thing you reached was answering machine. Nothing
22 else. It was saying thank you for calling. If this
23 is emergency like call back again tomorrow, which I
24 didn't have--

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1 (Applause)

2 I have to say I didn't have my phone because
3 when I don't have electricity our phone is through
4 the internet. I tried use my cellular whenever I
5 can. Even cellulars weren't working fine. I believe
6 Con Ed knew this was going to happen because we had
7 three years in a row, we had blackouts in our area.

8 I also believe it's not just Con Edison who
9 is responsible for all this. I believe whoever is
10 responsible for this nightmare should take the
11 responsibility, should accept their fault and
12 consequences, whatever they are.

13 All those days we felt like living in a
14 third world country. I did myself. 12 years ago
15 when I first moved to this country I have been told
16 this is America, capital of the world, land of
17 freedom, one of the richest country. When you don't
18 take care of this kind of simple needs for the
19 citizens I think you are just taking one of my basic
20 freedom, and I want to live in America. I don't want
21 to live third world country, third world look like
22 country. Thank you.

23 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much.

24 (Applause)

1 Next speaker is Richard Prado.

2 MR. PRADO: To start with, a couple of
3 points here. I would like to start with the critique
4 for Public Service Commission because I believe there
5 was no opportunity for this kind of public--

6 JUDGE LYNCH: Excuse me, sir. Could you try
7 to slow down just a little bit.

8 MR. PRADO: I will say that I think you can
9 the critique for the Public Service Commission
10 because there was no policy for these kind of
11 hearings. Public place, there is definitely 20
12 people so I believe that is kind of concern for the
13 Public Service Commission that there is not a lot of
14 publicity. I had so many things in my head.

15 JUDGE LYNCH: Take your time. Let me just
16 make sure I understand your first concern is there is
17 not enough people here and the Public Service
18 Commission should have done something to get more
19 people here.

20 MR. PRADO: Yes.

21 JUDGE LYNCH: Okay. Thank you.

22 MR. PRADO: First of all, I believe this out
23 power or this blackout, as you call it, because of
24 crisis in Queens, humanitarian crisis is series of

1 events in Queens, representative of criminal to care
2 safety, security or community. Without electricity,
3 without traffic lights, this is a threat to the
4 public, threat to the community.

5 I wouldn't know--there are so many people
6 have been dying and these how people call heat wave.

7 JUDGE LYNCH: Let me just try to- think you
8 said this was a humanitarian crisis and a threat to
9 what did you say?

10 MR. PRADO: To the community.

11 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. I just want to
12 make sure the reporter gets the main things of what
13 you are saying.

14 MR. PRADO: I had a concern about 1999 there
15 were recommendations for Attorney General Eliot
16 Spitzer who made the recommendation to Con Edison. I
17 don't know what happened with the recommendation, I
18 mean, because in 2003 we had whole day, 24 hours in
19 the whole city a blackout.

20 So, I don't know how the work is going on
21 because you have the Attorney General who made
22 recommendations to alleviate the kind of problems and
23 has blackout the whole city, and then two years and
24 we had a whole week, 100,000 people in western

1 Queens. I think something is wrong with that.

2 These things happen. La Guardia Community
3 College air conditioning not here for two days and it
4 was impossible to meet in the classroom to have the
5 classes. And I would like to know what is the policy
6 for the manual and converter for the state and city.

7 JUDGE LYNCH: Your last point, try again
8 because we are not--I didn't understand and I don't
9 think the reporter did. You were saying you were a
10 student and no AC and you lost two days of classes.
11 It was after that.

12 MR. PRADO: Yes. After that I would say
13 that if this blackout was humanitarian crisis where
14 were the mayor, governor? I would like to say too
15 that what would happen this week or the next month or
16 the next year when we have another crisis like this
17 in maybe Brooklyn or Bronx or whole city again,
18 because what do you say? You have to make
19 adjustments. And who the responsible for the
20 humanitarian crisis in Queens?

21 So, I would like to know when you come to
22 the hearings, made recommendation, what would happen
23 after the hearings, in the future will again another
24 blackout? And but to my humanitarian crisis, I

1 believe this is another corporation who is against
2 the people. I believe that humanitarian crisis was
3 caused by Con Ed as a private corporation.

4 Since a private corporation, who is more
5 important than the city, a private corporation or
6 hundred thousand people suffering for seven days? I
7 think that's all.

8 (Applause)

9 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much for your
10 statement, sir. The next speaker is Dorothy
11 Morehead.

12 MS. MOREHEAD: Good evening. I am a
13 resident and a business owner in Sunnyside, got two
14 businesses. I am a real estate broker and I have a
15 restaurant. The restaurant is open about a year and
16 a half. There were indications prior to the failure
17 of a power outage for several days.

18 On Sunday, over the weekend, Saturday and
19 Sunday, there was enough power for me to have a color
20 T.V. in my bedroom. I turned that T.V. down, tried
21 another one, picture would go on and the screen would
22 turn to blue and the T.V. would go off. There was
23 only enough power to support the black and white
24 television.

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1 In the restaurant on Tuesday, Monday and
2 Tuesday nights, there was not enough power to support
3 the air conditioner, but on Monday night, the 17th,
4 the building next door to mine went black, no power
5 and no elevators, nothing.

6 It did not happen all at once. Certainly
7 there was indications before the massive power outage
8 that we were losing power. The Tuesday night, I
9 called an electrician to come in and he found that
10 the air conditioner had actually burned out the
11 circuit so he replaced the circuits. And it
12 certainly was too warm in the restaurant.

13 JUDGE LYNCH: You mean circuit breaker or
14 circuit?

15 MS. MOREHEAD: Circuit breaker was burnt
16 out. There were two circuit breakers he had to
17 replace.

18 The next day things just started failing.
19 The walk in refrigerator went off, the exhaust motor
20 on the roof requires three wires and I don't know how
21 many phases went out. That exhaust motor was out.
22 It's only ten months old. It happened once before in
23 October when we had a storm. One of the three phases
24 went out and I had to replace the motor. That was

1 \$1,400, by the way, and I couldn't even get it
2 replaced until we had full power.

3 Nobody told us anything. You couldn't get a
4 hold of anybody at Con Ed, so I continued to ice the
5 food down. The ice machine lasted for a couple more
6 days. I was icing the food down but the walk in was,
7 it was obviously failing, it was hotter in there than
8 it was in the rest of the basement. Lost about
9 350 pounds of food, salmon, calamari, steak, chicken
10 and other products.

11 One of the things that was difficult in
12 trying to deal with Con Ed about having compensation
13 for food costs that were lost, never mind anything
14 else, is the cost of prepared food is not the cost.
15 It's much more than the sum of the pieces that go
16 into it.

17 I can give you an egg. I can give you cream
18 cheese and sugar. That doesn't make it a cheesecake.
19 The cooks make it the cheesecake. We lost all of our
20 cheesecake, chocolate mousse, bread pudding.
21 Everything is spoiled.

22 After that the freezer. The freezer lasted
23 longer than the walk in. Compressor burnt out, had
24 to come in and repair that, \$450. What happened

1 next? Of course business was ridiculous. There was
2 nobody. People were asking us is there something we
3 could do. They couldn't cook in home. We had an
4 outdoor space. Don, the chef, and I--we had bank,
5 one bank of lights in the restaurant, most of the
6 rest of the electric was out.

7 With candles and with the little bit of
8 electric light and grilling outdoors, we did open to
9 a few of our regular customers on Friday and Saturday
10 night.

11 And then Sunday we had a bridal shower,
12 bridal shower for 27 people, and they couldn't change
13 it. They had made arrangements in April for that
14 event, so we muddled through and people had a good
15 time.

16 What else? Financial, twice had to have the
17 electrician come in to replace the circuits that
18 burnt out. I couldn't open the night of the second
19 because it was too hot and not enough power for the
20 AC, about an \$800 loss.

21 The morning after we got full power, which
22 was we got it sometime Monday evening, the 24th, I
23 would say sometime between eight and ten the next
24 morning when I went to draw a hot bath there was no

1 power in my furnace. I hit the emergency button,
2 flash of light, and the transformer blew on my
3 furnace at home. That was over \$500 to repair that.

4 All of the people, by the way, say nothing
5 is covered by my repair warranties. The motor on the
6 roof, as I said, was ten-months-old. None of these
7 are covered because these are all deemed to be
8 failures from Con Ed and Con Ed is not claiming
9 responsibilities for any of that.

10 So, it went from it was sort of like living
11 in the dark ages, or I shouldn't say that. Dark ages
12 had other problems, but it went from being a pretty
13 normal society to everybody walking around trying to
14 find a place to eat, find a place to get water.
15 Nothing was opened in Sunnyside, nothing for blocks
16 and blocks and blocks.

17 I have a car. I could go to my son's and
18 shower and stay overnight if I wanted to, but there
19 are a lot of people who can't. I had one woman, as I
20 said, I worked in real estate. I had a client who
21 was on oxygen. She had to be evacuated and go
22 someplace because there was not electric for her
23 oxygen.

24 I had another friend who lost his dog who

1 died of heat stroke in the apartment on the second
2 day. I was relatively lucky. I live in a house I
3 could open a door. Safe neighborhood. Open the
4 terrace door and get a breeze through my house, but
5 people who live in smaller apartments there was no
6 cross ventilation, they really were suffering.

7 People had to walk up six flights of stairs.
8 Some of the buildings in the neighborhood are 12 and
9 13 stories tall. None of these had power. With the
10 duration of the outage, all of the emergency lights
11 were out so that my basement, the first few--the
12 first night the emergency lights came and went. They
13 would go off and on. We would have power and kick
14 off and power again, so you could tell when the
15 building was getting power whether or not the
16 emergency lights were on, but these are hard wired.
17 They are recharged batteries when there is power in
18 the building.

19 Once the power is out for a certain duration
20 there is no more battery power left and that was the
21 same thing with all the emergency lights throughout
22 Sunnyside. People walking up and down on pitch black
23 stairs couldn't see their hand in front of their
24 face. It was a very dangerous situation. It really

1 was. As I said, went from being relatively
2 normal to reading by candle light and people sitting
3 outside fanning themselves trying to stay cool and
4 help their neighbors.

5 People were very friendly. They helped
6 their neighbors. Biggest problems, one of the
7 biggest problems besides the lack of power was lack
8 of communications.

9 I hope these experiences will help give you
10 information and help prod the Commission to get
11 better service from Con Edison. Thank you.

12 (Applause)

13 JUDGE LYNCH: The next speaker is Ogudhanu
14 Lutas. Welcome, sir.

15 MR. LUTAS: Hello. My name is Ogudhanu
16 Lutas. I am 12-years-old and I live in Woodside,
17 Queens. 39-65 51st Street. And I think that this
18 blackout was just not fair for me and for everyone
19 else, and I suffered as much as everyone else did.
20 And I couldn't ride my bike outside because I live on
21 the fourth floor and I couldn't use the elevator and
22 I couldn't carry it down the stairs because it's too
23 heavy.

24 And it wasn't just fair and I thought that

1 all of this just--it just, when I thought about it, I
2 thought that like Con Edison, why didn't they warn us
3 before that this was going to happen? And why didn't
4 they say, hey, everyone, you are going to have a
5 blackout, or something like that?

6 I mean once when I was outside I saw this
7 Con Edison truck and they were giving out water and
8 ice and this guy was yelling and saying you want some
9 water? Hey, you want some ice? I said no, I want
10 electricity.

11 (Applause)

12 And the guy laughed and he walked away. And
13 then I walked away because I had nothing more to just
14 say to him.

15 And there was this old lady in my apartment
16 and she's like 80, in her 80s, 90s, and she walks
17 with this thing.

18 JUDGE LYNCH: A walker?

19 MR. LUTAS: She walks with a walker and
20 before the blackout she used the elevator to go
21 downstairs and to shop. Then when she came back the
22 elevator wasn't working and she lived on the third
23 floor and she could like barely walk. So she had to
24 use all of those stairs, and I felt so bad for her

1 and I thought that what if it was me, what would I
2 do. How would I feel. And it was just so unfair.
3 Thank you.

4 (Applause)

5 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much. The next
6 speaker is Kathy Nelson, I believe. Welcome.

7 MS. NELSON: I don't have as much to say as
8 the other speakers who really stated my case very
9 well, but what was so disturbing to me, what was so
10 disturbing to me and still is, is that how anybody in
11 the city can believe, and I hope this isn't true,
12 that there was no train service starting Tuesday
13 night into Wednesday. The Citibank building was
14 asked to close. The Metlife building was asked to
15 close. And how can Con Edison say that they didn't
16 have an inkling that customers, ordinary customers
17 like these people, were out?

18 (Applause)

19 How can the mayor's office say that they
20 didn't know that there may have been people out? And
21 what's even more disturbing is that how can Con
22 Edison tell the Public Service Commission, as its
23 overseer, that there is no mechanism involved for
24 monitoring demand?

1 For instance, on a normal day I don't know
2 how they measure it, in megawatts, 100,000 megawatts
3 5:00 p.m. and all of a sudden it goes down to maybe
4 60 megawatts. That's very disturbing. It was very,
5 very disturbing to call up Con Edison, and I got
6 somebody on the phone on Wednesday who actually
7 explained what was going on.

8 He said, to be honest with you, you are not
9 going to get service the earliest until Friday.
10 However, other people I know called the same day and
11 got nasty responses, and one was told you haven't
12 been out of service for 24 hours. You are making
13 this up.

14 Also, there were fire trucks and ambulances
15 constantly Tuesday and Wednesday night. And the
16 city, the mayor's office and Con Edison still weren't
17 acknowledging that, you know, there was a problem in
18 the communities with ordinary people or household
19 units and that is very disturbing. Anyway, thank
20 you.

21 (Applause)

22 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. Before I take the
23 next speaker I would like to recognize Assembly
24 Member Nolan is in the audience tonight. She was

1 here also this afternoon. And Senator Nolan.

2 Next speaker is Natalie Slipko. Let me say
3 also I have been remiss. After you finish we are
4 going to take a brief recess for the reporter. So,
5 go ahead and make your statement.

6 MS. SLIPKO: Like he said, my name is
7 Natalie Slipko. I have lived in Sunnyside, Queens
8 since 1997 and really never in my life have I wanted
9 to speak out about anything as I do tonight.

10 Con Ed's monopoly of a power system needs to
11 end. It's not preventative. They only fix things
12 when things need to be fixed. Fantastic policy and
13 safe policy to follow.

14 I had no power and hot water from July 17th
15 to July 23rd. A week before the blackout every night
16 I come home from work, lights were dimming, air
17 conditioner not working well. I thought it was just
18 a temporary power surge but of course it wasn't.

19 Monday, July 17th, lights seriously dimmed,
20 air conditioning's barely running, T.V. making loud
21 humming noise. Didn't put two and two together. I
22 noticed no reports on the news and figured it's not a
23 big deal.

24 Tuesday, July 18th, coming home from work

1 and my 20-minute train ride from the Lexington Avenue
2 stop turned into a one hour ride because the N train
3 was the only train that was running. 7 train was not
4 running, W or R were not running. So we were
5 extremely hot in the subway platform. The N and 7
6 also didn't have air conditioning. The 7 was only
7 running from Queensboro Plaza into Queens.

8 When I came back of course the electricity
9 was completely out. My apartment building was pitch
10 black. The elevator didn't work. I had to climb up
11 four flights of stairs in the dark alone. There was
12 no traffic lights and the street lights were off. No
13 one was directing traffic.

14 The thing I can't stress enough is how
15 unsafe the conditions were. I am a person that lives
16 by myself and I think I am a pretty fit person, but I
17 didn't feel safe, as tough a New Yorker as I am.

18 I did call 311 to Con Edison to report this.
19 I couldn't really get any indication when I was going
20 to get electricity back. Like what was mentioned,
21 there were barely any grocery stores open, barely
22 food, I couldn't find ice. I walked 20 minutes to
23 Stop and Shop. No ice anywhere.

24 Beyond that, Wednesday, of course July 19th,

1 I was starting to feel heat exhaustion. I had a
2 headache, dizzy, nauseated, still going to my job in
3 New York City, the only place I could stay cool.

4 Where were the cooling stations I didn't
5 know could exist until the New York City blackout
6 happened a week later and there was still no cooling
7 station, no Red Cross found, still no ice or anything
8 like that.

9 Thursday, July 20th, once again I tried
10 looking for ice, couldn't find anything, had to keep
11 eating out.

12 Friday, July 21st, there was a notice from
13 some inspector from 311 came to my apartment wanting
14 to inspect it to see what the conditions were. I had
15 no notice they were even coming by, so I called them
16 up on the phone. I said I wish you would have given
17 me notice, I would have stayed in my apartment, and I
18 got a little upset.

19 Obviously I had no electricity or hot water
20 for all these days. Woman said to me, no compassion
21 whatsoever, it's not my fault you don't have
22 electricity. This was the response that I got after
23 all these days and I had, like I said, seven days no
24 electricity, no hot water.

1 And it wasn't really until the end of the
2 week, Friday, Saturday, that I finally saw Red Cross
3 in the neighborhood giving out food, giving out ice.
4 Didn't see any Con Ed trucks.

5 Like I say, I can't stress enough I've never
6 seen Con Ed trucks in the close to ten years I've
7 been in the neighborhood trying to do anything
8 preventative. Never seen it. Even right now, as I
9 am speaking, I know it's raining, obviously they
10 can't work, I haven't been seeing them in the
11 neighborhood doing anything about the situation, and
12 I just really find that horrific.

13 It wasn't until-- and of course I was trying
14 to watch the news on black and white T.V. on
15 batteries and it was amazing to me how the news
16 wasn't even stressing the situation that was
17 happening here. It wasn't until the end of the week,
18 Thursday or Friday, that finally came to fruition.

19 People I worked with in New York had no idea
20 what I was going through here. Natalie, how are you
21 putting up with all this? I said, I know. So I had
22 no computer of course. On my lunch break I'd go to
23 the library in New York City. Went on line, channel
24 7 news, trying to report what about us in Sunnyside?

1 Finally Sunday, July 23rd, finally got power
2 back around 11:30 at night, but 3:00 a.m. in the
3 morning the power went out completely for five
4 minutes, making me uneasy and unable to sleep.

5 I think most of us feel buying food from the
6 grocery stores you didn't know was it going to be
7 good or spoiled. Also to add to that, you know, in
8 the meantime, yes, I was calling Con Edison every
9 single day trying to get some indication as to when
10 we were going to get electricity back. Might be
11 Friday. Might be Saturday. Might be Monday.

12 I couldn't imagine what families felt like,
13 pregnant women felt like, children, at this point. I
14 went on line in the library once again to find a
15 flight out of here. My hometown is Buffalo. For
16 once I would welcome snow. In looking at the flights
17 I couldn't afford it. Flights were \$500 or \$600 to
18 go home.

19 What was I supposed to do, you know? So
20 just, in conclusion, as with all of us, Con Edison
21 ruined our entire week or ten days, however we were
22 affected. I think that CEO Burke should be fired and
23 should be fined.

24 (Applause)

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1 Doesn't take an engineering degree to figure
2 out the grid has not been maintained all along. Over
3 the nine years I can't recall one instance of seeing
4 Con Edison make any improvements. I thought it was
5 my imagination, like I said, that it was a power
6 surge, and don't you find odd the power went out in
7 the areas closest to New York City?

8 Although Con Edison would have worked on the
9 system when it happened then, but it took until the
10 week of August 2nd when the fear of New York City was
11 going to be blacked out during the heat wave Mayor
12 Bloomberg asked New Yorkers to conserve power.
13 People in Queens don't matter to Con Edison,
14 Bloomberg or Pataki. When it comes to elections we
15 matter.

16 Before it was even printed I figured out
17 that Con Ed or Burke had to be making major
18 contributions for them to be complimented by
19 Bloomberg and Pataki and how heartless that was when
20 our lives were at stake.

21 If only Burke and Con Edison people would
22 have maintained the cables this could have been
23 avoided. If they had been honest with Queens and the
24 rest of New York we could have gotten help faster.

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1 Everything was covered up and miscalculated.

2 Asking us initially to turn in receipts and
3 take pictures of our spoiled food, who does that? I
4 mean seriously. Who takes pictures of your spoiled
5 food? How could I get a report? How could I get a
6 claim form if I didn't have a computer that was
7 running? How could I make the phone call? The only
8 way was on the cell phone and I happened to buy a
9 phone from the last blackout I could plug into an
10 outlet that didn't have an answering machine.

11 I would like Burke to actually donate his
12 million dollar salary or \$500,000 bonus to businesses
13 and people whose livelihoods and health were in
14 jeopardy.

15 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you.

16 (Applause)

17 Thank you very much. We are going to take a
18 five-minute recess at this point. I have six other
19 people who have signed up to speak and after the
20 break we will take them in due course.

21 Thank you very much. And I have about
22 12 minutes after eight, so why don't we come back
23 about 18 after.

24 (Recess taken)

1 JUDGE LYNCH: Come to order. I know there
2 is a few of you, it's late, and you want to be able
3 to finish up, and so let me try to get to you. And
4 thank you very much again for allowing that we take a
5 brief break.

6 The next speaker is Hayde Casablanca.
7 Welcome to our hearing.

8 MS. CASABLANCA: Thank you. I had so much
9 to say when I first got here but I think mostly
10 everybody that's been here has said a little part for
11 me as far as the feelings that I had the six days I
12 was without water, hot water, no air conditioner, no
13 fan, no television.

14 I dragged myself to work every day,
15 sweating, dying to get there so I could be under air
16 conditioner. I got home and my dog was miserable.
17 He looked like he was ready to pass out. I had
18 birds.

19 I have a 17-year-old daughter who did not
20 want to be in the house. And I lost all my food and
21 I just felt so lost, so alone. I tried calling Con
22 Ed every day for three days. I did not get no
23 response, no answer from them. All I got was we
24 don't know. We don't know. We don't know.

1 After five days I think without electricity,
2 without hot water or anything, we found out that the
3 fire department was handing out ice. After six days,
4 we found out the Red Cross was stationed somewhere on
5 Skillpin Avenue giving out ice and water. I could
6 not find ice anywhere around the neighborhood. The
7 price of the ice went up. For a bag of ice five
8 pounds, it was three, four dollars.

9 It was ridiculous, it was horrible, and
10 really I don't think I could really describe the
11 feeling that I had those days. I really can't now
12 because it was so horrible. I felt I was in a war
13 myself. Go to bed pitch black, trying to get in the
14 apartment with no lights. Feeling that somebody
15 could break into the apartment because it was so
16 dark.

17 It was horrible and I hope that Con Edison
18 takes responsibility for this and you follow up on
19 what they are doing to fix the cables. I fear that
20 they are old and they haven't been repaired and these
21 cables are supposed to be replaced every 40 years.
22 These are 60, 70-year old cables.

23 So, we had a lot of little mini blackouts in
24 our neighborhood. It's not the first. This was

1 coming and they knew it.

2 So, we need to really follow up and we need
3 our community to stay active and we are going to
4 definitely stay active.

5 (Applause)

6 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much. The next
7 speaker is Madelene DeLeon, I believe.

8 MS. DELEON: I am from Sunnyside and I live
9 on 41st Street on the other side of the boulevard so
10 I experienced a brownout, but it should have been a
11 blackout because the fan went shhh and the light was
12 this dim, nothing else worked.

13 But I wanted to respond to some of the
14 questions that you put on your form here on your
15 sheet.

16 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you.

17 MS. DELEON: One was do you think you
18 received timely and accurate and adequate information
19 from the company or otherwise about what was
20 happening before, during and after the service
21 outages? And to that I am going to say no. We did
22 not receive timely, accurate and adequate information
23 from Con Ed. I did not receive a courtesy call from
24 Con Ed until about well into like four or five days

1 and after that had happened I kind of just laughed.
2 I was like, where was this courtesy call from the
3 beginning? So, in terms of any information that
4 occurred, it didn't. We didn't get anything from our
5 radio or the newspapers or the news. We just didn't
6 have any information.

7 In regard to the question what are your
8 overall impressions about how the company responded
9 to the outages and your reasons for those
10 impressions. My impression of how Con Ed responded
11 to this blackout is poor basically. They didn't
12 respond. And when they finally did respond they lied
13 to us in terms of numbers. It wasn't until the media
14 exposed them did they finally come out with some
15 truth. So, my impression of Con Ed is poor. They
16 responded poorly.

17 The other thing I wanted to say is about
18 what are your recommendations about actions you
19 believe the company should or should not have taken
20 before, during and after the service interruptions.
21 My recommendation about Con Edison, about the actions
22 Con Ed should have taken before the outages is to do
23 some kind of actual maintenance. Based on what the
24 media had said, there were feeder cables that were

1 well over their time limit.

2 Why did that happen? Why was not
3 maintenance occurring? So there was lack of
4 maintenance.

5 During the outage I felt my safety was at
6 risk. The minute the lights were out steps should
7 have been taken immediately. People reported traffic
8 lights were out. Did Con Edison contact the city to
9 make sure there were traffic cops at each light? If
10 they did contact them, did the city ignore them?
11 Because, for instance, we have a five-way
12 intersection at Greenpoint Avenue and Sunnyside. On
13 either side there is about a block, about a block and
14 a half there is a park and school yard. There was
15 not a traffic cop there until four days later after
16 the media had exposed what was going on.

17 So, I felt my safety and my child's safety
18 was in jeopardy. We walked to the park. Can I go?
19 Can I not? That's unacceptable. Luckily no one was
20 hit there, but no one that I heard of was hit there,
21 I mean but honestly someone could have been hit and I
22 feel the measures that they took to take care of
23 that, it just didn't happen. It happened too late.

24 During the outages information about what

1 was happening should have been dispensed immediately
2 so people could have taken different steps. People
3 asked me why didn't you go to friend's house or why
4 didn't you go to your family's house? We didn't go
5 because we never knew what was happening.

6 We could have packed up my 86-year-old aunt
7 and uncle and brought them to my grandparents but we
8 never knew. Every day we would call, like, what's
9 going on? We don't know or tomorrow you will get
10 electricity. Tomorrow you will get electricity. So
11 lots of people waited and they didn't move because
12 they thought tomorrow I will get electricity.

13 I think information should have been--any
14 information should have been talked about right away,
15 not left until after the media says, hey, guess what?
16 There is a problem.

17 Also, why weren't senior living centers
18 contacted first? This is another recommendation that
19 should have happened. I mean there were people on
20 dialysis, people who had medications in their
21 refrigerator. That's gone. Senior centers should
22 have been immediately contacted. There is a problem
23 so we need to find a way of moving these people to a
24 safer place. That's another recommendation I have.

1 Now, I have been criticizing Con Edison but
2 I also have a criticism of the Public Service
3 Commission. In your mission statement you say "The
4 mission of the New York State Department of Public
5 Service is to ensure safe, secure and reliable access
6 to energy, telecommunication and water services for
7 New York State citizens and businesses". I didn't
8 feel safe. And, yes, I felt my safety was at risk.

9 Now, I know--I have been doing some research
10 and I know that the deregulation of the PSC has
11 occurred, but I ask that these committees be
12 reinstated so that Con Ed's books are continuing to
13 be looked at, and that the money that they get is
14 being distributed to maintenance.

15 Apparently there have been committees in the
16 Public Service Commission that have been--that no
17 longer exist, that should be there, that did regulate
18 the books of Con Ed and that did regulate where money
19 was going to. I think they need to be reinstated.

20 Now, I live in New York City and I have come
21 to realize things here don't get fixed or repaired.
22 The city of New York waits until things crumble,
23 break or die before something is done.

24 I call for a change. Electricity is a

1 necessity in the city, and I feel like not only Con
2 Edison and New York City failed us, but I feel the
3 PSC has failed us too in some way.

4 Something like this should have never
5 happened if we had people regulating Con Ed. I feel
6 like our system of checks and balance was not there.
7 And unfortunately this had to happen, but I do call
8 for a change.

9 And I am from Power for the People and
10 hopefully something will get done. But like other
11 people have said, we are starting a petition and
12 hopefully you will hear more about what's happening.

13 And for the record powerforthepeople.com if
14 you need to see more--dot info. Thank you.

15 (Applause)

16 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much. Next
17 speaker is Vincent J. Del Greco.

18 MR. DEL GRECO: Hi, how are you? My name is
19 Mr. Vincent DelGrecco. I reside in the Ditmars
20 section of Astoria. About a year ago when I
21 imigrated to Astoria from Long Island I was unaware
22 that when situations arise in the city that people
23 don't step into make sure these situations don't
24 occur again.

1 I will tell you I am quite shocked that
2 having grown up on Long Island at least when there
3 was a problem with LILCO or the telephone company or
4 any of our elected officials we got them out of
5 office.

6 But I notice here in the city things are a
7 little bit different and they operate a little
8 different. I must say living in New York City the
9 past year, according to my experience with the power
10 outage amongst other things, people in the city are
11 not listened to and they are not heard and people
12 don't pay attention to what others are saying.

13 I mean when I walked into the room here I
14 could not believe just how few people had actually
15 showed up. I believe power is in numbers. And I
16 have noticed that, like what other speakers have said
17 tonight, that New York City only takes care of
18 matters when things die, crumble, destroyed or
19 whatever else.

20 But the point is that a lot of stuff
21 happened during the week and a half power outage, and
22 one of the situations I have had is that about four
23 months ago I rescued a dog that was a stray who
24 requires insulin. He's a diabetic. I find it very

1 difficult as a parent to a dog who had been badly
2 abused to be able to take care of and administer
3 medication to an animal without electricity. Do you
4 know what I am trying to say?

5 When the power was finally out in my
6 building, which is owned by Pacific Properties, it's
7 in the complex in the Ditmars section of Astoria, I
8 noticed that management basically fled the building
9 and basically did not inform any of the tenants or
10 homeowners within the complex that we had a blackout,
11 nor did they inform Con Edison of such a situation.

12 We had no security for five days. Our
13 gates, which are powered by electricity, had to
14 remain open 24 hours a day, which means that any
15 crook and criminal in the city can walk in.

16 And basically no one seems responsible for
17 anything. Not Con Edison, not the criminal behaviors
18 of the individuals running the property,
19 especially--by the way, one positive thing that may
20 have occurred through all the blackout is that for
21 the first time Pacific Properties is now going to be
22 investigated for their greed, their criminal
23 practices and their corruption, because without the
24 blackout there had been over the years a number,

1 numbers of complaints filed against this one
2 particular building that went co-op three years ago
3 but no one was able to do anything to have situations
4 rectified. And it was because of the blackout that
5 finally an investigation has been undergoing into
6 their business practices, their corruption, amongst
7 other things, and it was all because of the news
8 article printed in Spanish by a local--I think it was
9 Universal Television or something had actually done a
10 piece on the blackout and the problems which lead to
11 all of this.

12 So, if there's anything positive to come of
13 this, it is the fact that it's finally being
14 investigated, because if you drive up or down Ditmars
15 you will see it is the only co-op building in the
16 area which has I would say on average every couple
17 years at least three or four shingles fall from the
18 side of the building and it really is the only
19 building in the area that will probably crumble
20 before anything new is done to rectify the many
21 health and safety violations.

22 JUDGE LYNCH: I am going to have to ask you
23 to come back to anything related to the outage.

24 MR. DELGRECO: Actually, I apologize.

1 JUDGE LYNCH: That's okay.

2 MR. DELGRECO: The only thing related to the
3 outage was that like I basically agree with
4 everything else everyone else has said here tonight.

5 As far as my own personal situation, I had
6 to work and I could not leave my ground level
7 apartment to go out to Long Island to visit family
8 because without security or without electricity or
9 the gates locked it's quite possible that somebody
10 could throw a rock in the window and break it.

11 As far as my power situation, yeah, I coped
12 with it but it was rather difficult. For those who
13 have family, elderly people, sick people, that's
14 something entirely different. I am sure they had it
15 a lot worse.

16 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you.

17 MR. DELGRECO: I'm sorry. I am not known
18 for my public speaking.

19 JUDGE LYNCH: I thought you did fine.

20 MR. DELGRECO: Hopefully something will be
21 of benefit to you.

22 (Applause).

23 JUDGE LYNCH: The next speaker is Alice
24 Tufel.

1 MS. TUFEL: I just want to echo all the
2 previous speakers' testimony. I also can't really
3 add to the horrific stories, but especially the
4 comments about demographic disparities, because it's
5 so obvious and it needs to be acknowledged.
6 Especially, it's not just northwest Queens. Isn't it
7 funny the other place is Washington Heights that had
8 problems.

9 Anyway, I live on 42nd Street in Sunnyside.
10 Like many other people, I had no or partial power for
11 about three days, it was rather scattershot in my
12 building. Every apartment seemed to be different.
13 It was very dark and we never got any explanation
14 about that.

15 We had no elevators, no hot water, no power
16 for about three days. Got it back for about three
17 days, then lost it again for a day. During that time
18 we, like many other people, had no food and no
19 restaurants to go to so we had to eat in Manhattan.

20 We didn't have any family that we could go
21 to in the immediate neighborhood. This was not--this
22 did not affect me personally, but just a note in my
23 building one of my neighbors had her baby on the
24 bathroom floor during the power outage and she was

1 just lucky there was no complications because EMS
2 didn't get there in time. So, you know, it was
3 probably one of many, many unbelievable stories that
4 happened during this time.

5 Some of it--just to address the questions
6 that PSC has asked specifically, particularly about
7 attempting to contact Con Ed and whether or not we
8 received timely information, I called the company
9 several times on my own and also sometimes in
10 response to a couple of recorded messages that we
11 got. I either got a human being who told me he had
12 no idea when we were going to get our power back or I
13 got a recorded message saying they were trying to fir
14 the power. Thanks for being patient. Click.

15 That was it. So, I think the response was
16 pretty awful. I didn't see any response until three
17 or four days in. Again, this is certainly
18 inadequate.

19 As far as the question about what Con Ed
20 might have done before, obviously as has been said by
21 other people here, maintain the system. I mean, you
22 know, clearly it was not maintained and it should
23 have been.

24 Another little story about Con Ed's

1 response. When we last lost our power the second
2 time I and one of my neighbors called several news
3 stations to say if anybody cares power is out in
4 Sunnyside. I spoke to WCBS twice and the second time
5 the woman I spoke to told me that she had called Con
6 Ed to confirm my story, as if Con Ed were a reliable
7 source of information, but Con Ed told her it was
8 only my building.

9 I was standing in a dark apartment looking
10 out the window at the darkened block, and I am sure
11 there were other blocks at that point in Sunnyside
12 that were also out.

13 Again, as far as Con Ed's response,
14 deliberately deceptive and incompetent.

15 (Applause)

16 PSC's actions, I don't understand why if Con
17 Ed was actually filling out the reports and
18 submitting them what happened to those reports? Did
19 they go into a file drawer and were never seen again?
20 That, you know, certainly PSC should be doing
21 something about that.

22 Maybe work with the mayor. I don't know
23 exactly what your role is. Other people said, again,
24 the mayor's response was abysmal. He's the mayor of

1 the city and to say I didn't know what was going on,
2 he's the mayor of the city. He's not the mayor of
3 Manhattan. He's the mayor of New York City, which
4 includes five boroughs.

5 (Applause)

6 You know, Public Service Commission is
7 supposed to serve the public, so do it. That's my
8 comment to the Public Service Commission.

9 And as far as actions for Con Ed to take, I
10 think we should all get a full credit at a minimum
11 for July's bill. At least one month, minimum. Con
12 Ed should be heavily fined. They should obviously
13 repair the system. I think the buck has to stop
14 somewhere and Kevin Burke should go because he's
15 clearly not taking responsibility for anything.

16 I think regulation should come back. And I
17 think we should be compensated not just for our
18 spoiled food, but meals we had to eat out and any
19 other pain and suffering that occurred during this
20 time.

21 Just also one more comment about the small
22 businesses that were so badly hurt. That hurts them
23 and it hurts the community. I mean we--it's a
24 neighborhood. It's a friendly community. And when

1 the small businesses go we all suffer. I was just in
2 a little store on Queens Boulevard before I came here
3 and the woman who owns that store is really hurting.
4 She said she's running all kinds of sales to move the
5 merchandise. She doesn't sell food, so she doesn't
6 have the same claim that she can make, but she had no
7 air and she had to close up her shop and she doesn't
8 know if she can survive now.

9 I mean, you know, there are just so many
10 ways people need to be compensated--individuals,
11 businesses and the entire community. Thank you.

12 (Applause)

13 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. The next speaker
14 is R.L. Singer.

15 MS. SINGER: Good evening. I live at 21st
16 Street and 34th Avenue, Astoria, Long Island City.
17 34th Avenue is the boundary of Council Members Gioia
18 and Vallone's district. I want to thank them both
19 and also Assemblyman Gianaris for putting a public
20 face on this crisis. I have one observation and
21 recommendation and some smaller points.

22 Observation. During the same week of the
23 northwest Queens blackout there was a storm related
24 power outage in the metropolitan St. Louis region, on

1 both sides of the Mississippi River, in Missouri and
2 Illinois. Since I lived for a time in University
3 City, Missouri in St. Louis County I checked the
4 website of the power company Ameren to see what was
5 going on and how my friends were faring.

6 Ameren reported 1.1 million customer outages
7 during two storms that week. Ameren posts an outage
8 map on line in real time on its website with a zip
9 code feature listing total number of customers served
10 by zip code and number of customers without power.
11 This feature has an update every 30 minutes.

12 Long Island Power Authority website also has
13 an outage map with summaries of outages by township
14 and village with a 30 minute update on total number
15 of customers served and number of customers without
16 power.

17 When I checked the Con Edison website I
18 could not find an outage map. Maybe there was one.
19 When I searched the site for outage map the response
20 was "no documents matching your query were found".
21 So, I sent an inquiry to Con Ed asking where on its
22 website I could find an outage map. There was no
23 reply.

24 The New York Times published pages of huge

1 photos of people in our neighborhoods who were
2 suffering but no map showing the affected area. I
3 sent a note to the New York Times news desk
4 suggesting that it publish a map of the northwest
5 Queens neighborhoods without power. It did not.
6 Nor could I find outage maps on any of the local
7 paper websites.

8 Recommendation. I respectfully suggest that
9 the Public Service Commission require Con Ed to run
10 an accurate real time outage map on its website
11 searchable by borough, neighborhood and zip code,
12 showing total number of customers in each and number
13 of customers without power with an update every 15 or
14 30 minutes.

15 Unreported stories. The New York City
16 Department of City Planning notes 200,000 residents
17 in Community Board One, Astoria, Long Island City and
18 100,000 residents in Community Meeting Board--excuse
19 me--Community District. It's Community District One
20 and Community District Two, which is Sunnyside,
21 Woodside based on the 2000 census statistics. There
22 are of course more than 300,000 people now residing
23 in northwest Queens.

24 While it is now well known that

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1 approximately 100,000 people experienced total
2 blackout, I was one of those who experienced low
3 voltage and whose co-op responded to Con Ed's request
4 to conserve. We shut one of two elevators on each
5 building and the laundry room was locked for the week
6 and once again during last week's heat wave. The
7 hundreds of thousands in the neighborhood with low
8 voltage is an unreported story. We all know the
9 blackout could have been much worse.

10 Also unreported and basically unknown are
11 the number of illegal conversions, illegally
12 converted apartments tapping illegally into the power
13 grid. How do we know the impact of this on the power
14 grid on power outages? The Central Astoria Local
15 Development Coalition has a housing advisor who may
16 have information on this problem.

17 Regarding street trees and power lines,
18 several of the power company websites refer to the
19 importance of trimming trees near power lines. As a
20 street tree census volunteer for the Department of
21 Parks, I learned that the city's schedule for
22 trimming a street tree is once every ten years. I
23 found nothing about trees and power lines on the Con
24 Ed website.

1 I know that during the monsoons last Monday
2 and again this evening that parks department deploys
3 a contractor to remove trees and tree limbs felled by
4 storms near power lines. And even though last
5 month's Con Ed blackout in northwest Queens involved
6 underground cables, I wonder about New York City's
7 street trees and Con Ed power lines. Perhaps this is
8 another issue which the PSC could look into.

9 I also wanted to say something about the
10 response of our local city government, and encourage
11 the PSC to look at the television footage of the
12 mayor when he was at a photo opportunity, it was the
13 graduation of people receiving GEDs and he was asked
14 about when was he going to get to northwest Queens,
15 and his response was people in lots of neighborhoods
16 want me to come visit them, and just making complete
17 lightness of what was going on.

18 I think that the mayor's staff failed him,
19 that they should have been in our neighborhoods with
20 their boots on the ground. There is in New York City
21 an elected public advocate. If you looked at the
22 public advocate website there was no information
23 about this blackout, and when you looked at the
24 NYC.gov website, perhaps you can go check this out,

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1 that for the first three days that we were
2 experiencing a blackout not only was this not number
3 one on the website, but when it finally got put on
4 the website it was referred to--the headline was that
5 there was power outages in pockets throughout the
6 city, as if it was happening somewhere else besides
7 northwest Queens. Thank you.

8 (Applause)

9 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you very much for your
10 comments. The next speaker is Paul Schubert.

11 MR. SCHUBERT: Yes. Thank you. Good
12 afternoon, sir. My name is Paul Schubert. I am a
13 resident of Rockaway, the small peninsula part of
14 Queens. And I watched the testimony of the City
15 Council on New York One and I saw Peter Vallone
16 testify that he wanted civil charges and criminal
17 charges if they could be brought to bear against the
18 officers of Consolidated Edison of New York State.

19 Now, I also watched Mr. Burke testify that
20 one of the feeder cables which failed--about 20
21 feeder cables--was installed in 67 years ago. Now,
22 those of us who are familiar with Thomas Alva Edison
23 might remark he was alive when this feeder cable was
24 installed.

1 (Applause)

2 Now, I had the joy of looking at a small
3 electrical engineering book many years ago
4 recommending when wiring in a house or business
5 should be installed. And I looked at the charts.
6 The average household wiring or commercial is only
7 good about 30, 40 years in residential buildings and
8 businesses, according to this electrical engineering
9 handbook, which I found in the Science Research
10 Library at 35th Street and Madison Avenue, if anyone
11 wants to go there.

12 Now, Councilman Hiram Monseratte, when
13 asking Mr. Burke how many generators powered by
14 diesel and other fuel were used in Queens, Mr. Burke
15 stated that he was able through a tri-state search
16 for generating companies which could bring them in by
17 contract, he was able to obtain 50 generators to
18 service all of the businesses, nursing homes,
19 hospitals, and senior citizen centers in northwest
20 Queens.

21 Mr. Monseratte replied that his staff, after
22 making a search of the web, was able to find over a
23 hundred generators in the tri-state area without
24 working overly hard at doing so. And Mr. Monseratte

1 wanted Con Ed to make sure they had at least a
2 hundred generators per borough for a future blackout.

3 Now, I also want to speak about wind power.
4 The New York Power Authority has made it a policy
5 that if you have a wind generator--basically NYSERDA,
6 which is New York State Energy & Research Development
7 Authority, has stated on their website the average
8 household required six kw or kilowatts of power.
9 Now, they will give you a rebate if you buy a
10 generator source, solar or wind, for 10kw.

11 Now, we all know the economies of scale. If
12 three homeowners were to get together and buy a 20 kw
13 generator they would not qualify for the rebate. The
14 rebate is only from 500 watts to 10 kw. Anything
15 over 80 kw is only 15 percent.

16 I found an excellent company which had a
17 wind generator which does 100 kw, which would supply
18 about 15 homes. Long Island Power Authority--I spoke
19 to the director of NYSERDA in New York City here
20 today. He stated to me he was in extreme objection
21 to Long Island Power Authority not contributing to
22 the NYSERDA program.

23 JUDGE LYNCH: Okay, excuse me, sir. I want
24 to caution you that this sounds a little to me like

1 it's off the topic. And this may be important, but
2 there may be other forums for it. Really tonight
3 what we are most interested in hearing about is any
4 information that's pertinent to this outage. And let
5 me ask you to confine your remarks to that.

6 MR. SCHUBERT: Also, to quote my Uncle John,
7 who is a merchant seaman working on engines for
8 30 years, more equipment is lost through lack of
9 proper maintenance than is ever been overused or
10 abused.

11 And I believe that Con Ed has demonstrated a
12 total lack of maintenance on their part, and I
13 believe that that just needs to be addressed, and
14 alternative power sources need to be brought into
15 bear also. Something that Consolidated Evidence and
16 New York Power Authority apparently have a policy of
17 discouraging through their policies and stated rules
18 and regulations.

19 And I want to thank my fellow citizens for
20 their time, and you also gentlemen, and I am hoping
21 that we can be in touch and we can work out
22 reasonable solutions as reasonable men always do.
23 Thank you so much.

24 (Applause)

1 JUDGE LYNCH: The next speaker is Maria
2 Guzman.

3 MS. GUZMAN: I live on 46th Street on 43rd
4 Avenue in Sunnyside. Of course we have one week
5 Monday through Monday we have no power. I'm not used
6 to these. I am so surprised here don't know how to
7 save energy, how it's gone through the crisis.

8 I hear of the stories so true and real. As
9 my friend say it was a humanitarian, but we have a
10 very different and very, very poor response from the
11 authorities. That remind me Katrina.

12 I tell you why I ask me different. I can
13 give you samples. The mayor came to Astoria in an
14 air conditioned limo to visit people in 100 degree
15 heat. Came to my building to interview my neighbor
16 whose dog, 140 pound dog died. My neighbor was 89.
17 I took care of her. I run downstairs. I pick up
18 chairs, actually they come to the street because they
19 were fixing the blackouts. I had to run and go
20 upstairs fourth floor.

21 One day I have only one outlet and I was
22 saving to have a fan running very, very slow and I
23 invite her to my apartment and to make it short she
24 survive.

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1 I don't mind the T.V. Oh, actually, there
2 was a phone number to call and I said let's call this
3 phone number. We call, there was 1-800 number that
4 Con Edison was giving day one to three. I got it
5 tonight. No answer.

6 I don't mind the T.V. I don't mind the
7 computer. I was happy, no computer, no T.V., it was
8 great, but I mind the people. Where was Con Edison?
9 Where were the authorities? This is for all my
10 request. Different services of sources of energy,
11 different powers. Thank you.

12 (Applause)

13 JUDGE LYNCH: The next speaker is Adrian
14 Giery.

15 MR. GIERY: I won't repeat anything that has
16 been said several times actually, and I am sure in
17 the course of the hearings many times, but there is
18 something that hasn't been mentioned and it may not
19 appear to be pertinent but I think it was an issue
20 that should be considered in the investigation.

21 In my area we had a brownout on Monday night
22 on July 17th and completely lost power on Tuesday,
23 July 18th. Power was restored late in the day on
24 Wednesday July 19th to the area. However, most of

1 the area completely lost power again about 11:00 p.m.
2 on Wednesday with the exception of certain apartments
3 in the building in which I live and certain houses on
4 the block and across the street. And it seemed to be
5 haphazard. Why would one apartment have electric
6 full power and the other apartment immediately below
7 or beside it be completely black?

8 And I noticed that those who continued to
9 have power had relatively new accounts, approximately
10 a year or less. The house across the street that had
11 power had changed hands within the last year.
12 Another house across the street that continued to
13 have power had been renovated within the last year.
14 Neighbors that had moved in within the last year
15 continued to have power.

16 However, those of us, who had been there for
17 some time completely lost power. And I just thought
18 that was so odd that it was worth looking, worth
19 mentioning at the very least and worth looking into.
20 I don't understand how that would be possible, but
21 that's exactly what happened.

22 Those people that continued to have power
23 all day Thursday did lose it I believe on Friday, and
24 perhaps during the night Thursday to Friday, and they

1 were also completely black Friday, Saturday and we
2 got our power back via generators Sunday night.

3 I don't know if that happened in other
4 areas. I would think it did. I don't know how that
5 would be possible.

6 (Applause)

7 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. The next speaker
8 is Don McCallian.

9 MR. MCCALLIAN: My name is Donald McCallian.
10 I am a resident of Sunnyside for almost 50 years now,
11 but I am a member of a council and also I do some
12 work for Cathy Nolan, who just left us, who has been
13 extremely instrumental in getting information out for
14 people and giving her office up for the Con Ed people
15 to work outside. And also I think she's going back
16 to Albany with the intent of having some kind of
17 legislation pass so that this does not occur anywhere
18 in the city in the future.

19 But my main question, I am not going to beat
20 a dead horse either because you heard it all, the
21 first question on your questionnaire I couldn't
22 believe, what has been caused to you or the
23 neighborhood by the outages. It's unbelievable what
24 happened. It's caused economically, the elderly

1 suffered, the sick suffered, the animals suffered and
2 certainly the people suffered. Many couldn't get to
3 work. We have a strong tenants association which I
4 also founded, and I am the starting officer of in our
5 building, and we had to assist a 325-pound woman to
6 her apartment on the sixth floor. You can imagine
7 what it's like in the six floors and above, or fourth
8 floors and above, going up and down. There is
9 absolutely no lighting anywhere in the building.

10 But anyway, my questions are: How long has
11 Mr. Burke been with Con Ed? That's my first question
12 for the record. Secondly, in 1999, as has been
13 mentioned by Cathy Nolan on our first T.V., which was
14 the Monday after the blackout, Eliot Spitzer wrote a
15 memorandum up in Albany about the Inwood, Washington
16 Heights blackout.

17 In that memorandum he went through five
18 items which he and his private investigators had
19 found that were wrong, and two of those were the very
20 same thing you are talking about today, the feeders.
21 The main feeder and then the feeders from the main
22 feeder into the various neighborhoods and into the
23 various houses and apartment houses.

24 Later on in the memorandum, three page

1 memorandum, he made five recommendations all about
2 maintenance and about PSC getting more involved in
3 their role to make sure that Con Ed was doing the job
4 it was supposed to do for the rates they are
5 collecting.

6 I would love to know for the record: What
7 happened to that memorandum? In the memorandum he
8 asked for a report by 2000, by early 2000, that took
9 place in '99, as I said, and he wanted a plan
10 submitted back through the Public Service Commission.
11 Obviously it didn't happen because here we are in
12 2006 and the same situation, almost exactly to the
13 letter, that happened in Washington Heights, Inwood
14 in '99 has happened in Sunnyside, Woodside and Long
15 Island City and most of Astoria.

16 That gentleman talked about one house having
17 light and another house not having light. Most of us
18 did not have light, but there were apartments where
19 one room had light and the other rooms did not. That
20 to me is--just blows my mind. Didn't happen in our
21 complex but it did happen in the Celtics and a few
22 other places.

23 My second question is: If any of the
24 executives that are still around, Mr. Burke is taking

1 the heat and rightfully should, he's the boss, the
2 buck stops with him, but if any of the executives
3 that were around in '99 are still around, I think
4 they are the ones that should be looked at for
5 possible replacement or demotion or something.

6 My next question is: Who is responsible for
7 communications? Scotland Yard caught a few
8 terrorists. We all heard about it by now. Detail
9 about what we should be packing in the bags and what
10 was happening to the flights between London and New
11 York was on the radio and on the televisions at about
12 an hour or two after these individuals were caught
13 and plans detected.

14 My question is: Why wasn't some kind of
15 information at least on radio so that the people
16 would know what was happening much before it was
17 happening? Our politicians didn't know. The people
18 certainly didn't know. And the only Red Cross truck
19 that got into the area early was at the Berkely
20 Towers because Eric Gioia arranged it.

21 Who handles communications? If they are
22 still around, I think they need a few lessons on how
23 to get the information out to the people. That's
24 half the battle. If we know what we have to do in

1 our apartment houses and in our homes and get out on
2 the blocks to make sure the traffic is moving right
3 and people are protected we do it, but we got to
4 know.

5 The other thing is: Who is responsible for
6 public relations? I have to say I disagree a little
7 bit with some of the things that have been said about
8 Con Ed employees. The people from I believe--I
9 believe they are from what you call the community
10 fair groups that were working the senior center and
11 here at La Guardia and other places helping people
12 fill out the forms and get them in in the right way
13 so that they can get the money back from spoilage,
14 those people are doing a tremendous job.

15 We have Zamir and Fred and Veronica over at
16 the senior citizens center, and they are tremendous
17 people and they really put the hours in and they are
18 nice. I would look at some of them for promotion
19 into the PR section and communications section if I
20 were running Con Ed, which I am not.

21 I think last but not least, and I don't know
22 if it's true or false, I hate to quote things that I
23 have heard and things I read in the papers until it's
24 really proven fact, but Con Ed supposedly made a

1 profit of over \$1 billion net, not gross, net, that
2 went into Con Ed's pocket, supposedly, and into the
3 stockholders' pocket I hope.

4 But anyway, long story short, how much
5 should that one billion net--and here's where the
6 Public Service Commission comes in--is going to be
7 spent on the repairs that could have been done
8 between '99 and now to prevent something like this
9 from happening? How much of that profit is going to
10 go into repairing these feeders because I
11 don't--sombbody's got to convince me it's not
12 Sunnyside, Woodside and Astoria only.

13 I would say I would suspect that northern
14 Queens is in danger, or the whole borough of Queens
15 may be in danger, but I think some of that profit
16 should go back and fix these feeders and fix this so
17 it doesn't happen again. We can handle the situation
18 here in this neighborhood. We all band together when
19 we have to and I think the Power to the People is a
20 tremendous thing you are starting. I think it has to
21 be hooked up with an organization like the One Way
22 Council, and some of the other civic groups that are
23 working in our area, Woodside on the Move, etc.

24 I think we are all together. Maybe that's what

1 we need. We got to make sure it's done this time.

2 That's all I have to say, but I really do
3 think that Con Ed has added insult to injury by
4 putting--giving a credit on the recent bill which I
5 just opened today of \$3. I think that's a complete
6 insult to the intelligence of the people. And I want
7 to donate three bucks to the Red Cross.

8 (Applause)

9 Give us a break and let us know what you are
10 going to do about it, and I hope that we don't have a
11 repeat another ten years from now, nine years from
12 now, of the Washington Heights, Inwood, Sunnyside,
13 Woodside, Astoria event. I mean it shouldn't happen
14 ever again.

15 I would like to go on record to ask Con
16 Edison to please try not to let it happen again.
17 Thank you.

18 (Applause)

19 JUDGE LYNCH: We are to our last speaker
20 that signed up this evening. And this is Orhan
21 Ulutas.

22 MR. ULUTAS: My name is Orhan Ulutas. My
23 wife and my son did explain exactly how we suffered,
24 and I would like to add some short things on that.

1 You know, anythings can happen, I understand that,
2 because we are all human beings, but it is one thing
3 that I cannot accept and I cannot understand, which
4 is information.

5 Okay, something happened but there is no
6 information. When this happened I was listening my
7 radio from my car every day and then I come back home
8 and I was telling them exactly what I heard on the
9 radio. Con Edison working and it's around the clock.

10 I mean English is my second language. What
11 does around the clock means? I mean one hour? Two
12 hour? Three hour? You know, around the clock. It
13 was seven days. That means around the clock is on
14 Con Edison seven to ten days. Around the clock is
15 seven to ten days. This I know.

16 And second things, you know, it's really
17 interesting. You know, you cannot get the
18 information. You call it and call it and call it.
19 Listen to radio, around the clock. It's like
20 nightmare. You don't know what to do. Maybe you can
21 go to your friend house, you can stay there, you
22 don't know how much it will continue.

23 Another funny thing--it is funny. One of my
24 friend who lives in Astoria he told me a story.

1 Really funny, but it's also scary. The guy called
2 Con Edison, you know, hundred times. At the end he
3 could talk to them over the phone. He asked when
4 this will happen, what's going on. And Con Edison
5 said, sir, watch the T.V. He couldn't say nothing
6 else because there is no electricity.

7 Thank you very much.

8 (Applause)

9 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. That's the last
10 card that I have. Are there any more cards? Is
11 there anyone else who wants to make a statement this
12 evening? If not, thank you very much for coming, for
13 your comments, and have a good evening. This hearing
14 is adjourned.

15 (Hearing adjourned.)

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