

BEFORE THE NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Gas

Case Number: 22-G-0065

Proceeding on Motion of the Commission as to the Rates, Charges, Rules and Regulations of Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. for Gas Service.

Electric

Case Number: 22-E-0064

Proceeding on Motion of the Commission as to the Rates, Charges, Rules and Regulations of Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. for Electric Service.

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZOHRAN K. MAMDANI,
36TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

May 20, 2022

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Introduction and Qualifications

Q. Please state your name and business address.

A: Assembly Member Zohran K. Mamdani, District 36
24-08 32nd St. Suite 1002A
Queens, NY 11102.

Q. What is your occupation?

A: I am the Assembly Member for Assembly District 36 (AD36), representing Astoria, Ditmars Steinway, and Astoria Heights.

Q. Have you previously testified before the Commission?

A: No.

Q. Describe your office.

A: My office fights for a future in which each and every New Yorker lives a dignified life and where the distribution of that dignity is not determined by the market. At a time when almost a quarter of our neighbors across Astoria spend half their income on rent, when they breathe the most polluted air in Queens, and where they are profiled at the highest rates of any neighborhood in the borough, we believe that the future we deserve is one where housing, energy, and justice are for the many, not just the few. This vision informs our legislative advocacy and priorities, our constituent services and our community organizing in AD36.

We work one-on-one with constituents who need help accessing services and navigating thorny bureaucratic issues. The focus of this work is on meeting immediate needs. Constituent services are a direct line to understanding the needs and issues that our neighbors face and serves as a foundation for our legislation, our organizing efforts, and understanding how we can leverage our office to meet the needs of our community.

Our office also conducts outreach to inform our neighbors of government programs and social services programs such as the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, the Excluded Workers Fund, and unemployment benefits. We organize with our neighbors to bring dignity to all in Astoria, leading efforts such as a district-wide meal distribution during Ramadan and organizing tenants in the district.

Q. Please summarize your expertise and background.

A: My background and expertise begins with being born and raised in Kampala, Uganda, and moving to New York City with my family at the age of seven. I am a graduate of the NYC Public School System,

attending the Bronx High School of Science and then going on to receive a Bachelor's Degree in Africana Studies from Bowdoin College.

Prior to representing the 36th Assembly District, I worked as a foreclosure prevention housing counselor, helping low and middle-income homeowners of color across Queens fight off eviction. This job made me intimately familiar with just how precarious New Yorkers' housing situations are. My clients, while culturally depicted as examples of the American dream — immigrants who had worked hard and been able to buy a home in New York City — were living just one unfortunate circumstance away from becoming delinquent on their mortgage, and being put on the fast track for foreclosure. For some, it was a sudden job loss, for others, a family emergency, an unexpected health condition, or a rate increase for their utilities. As I spent my days negotiating with banks on behalf of my clients in attempt to forestall their eviction, I learned, case by case, how disastrous and consequential the state's decision has been to gradually retract from the regulation of economic sectors that form the bedrock of New Yorkers' lives — housing, energy, and healthcare, among others.

I was elected to the New York State Assembly in 2020, representing the neighborhoods of Astoria, Ditmars-Steinway, and Astoria Heights. These neighborhoods, and the thousands of constituents who live in each, are all within the Con Edison territory that is affected by this rate case.

In the Assembly, I serve on multiple committees, including the Energy committee. It is that committee and issue area where I have devoted most of my time in Albany and have consequently been recognized as one the top 40 individuals “reshaping the energy industry” in New York by *City & State*. I am an active presence in hearings, have held committee-specific legislative briefings with colleagues, convened roundtables with labor unions on energy issues, and am the prime sponsor of the Clean Futures Act — a bill that would prohibit the construction of any new fossil fuel-powered power plants unless a reliability need was present that renewable infrastructure was unable to meet. It currently has 42 co-sponsors.

Q: What is your purpose in submitting this testimony?

A: Our office is tasked with representing our constituents and resolving their concerns. As constituent issues with Con Edison have comprised 25% of our constituent cases this year, we submit this testimony to ensure that the concerns of AD36 (and beyond) are being represented in this case. Our testimony is informed by the 260 constituents who contacted us about this rate case. Similarly, our call for a rate reduction is one that is made on behalf of the 244 constituents who wrote to my office calling for exactly that.

Q: Please describe the demographics of AD36.

A: The population of AD36 is diverse. Fifty-six percent are white, 23% are Hispanic, 16% are Asian, 2.5% are Black, and 2% identify with two or more races. District 36 is home to a significant immigrant population: 37% of residents were born in another country, with 30% of the foreign-born population coming from Latin America and 28.1% from Asia. Most AD36 inhabitants are renters (78%), and 17% are 65 and over.

Our median household income and high school graduate rate are higher than New York City overall at \$85,303 and 89.9% respectively. Given that access and affordability correlate with socio-economic status and education levels, the fact that many of our constituents in AD36 still struggle to pay their utility bills reveals the depth of utility and gas hardship across the city.

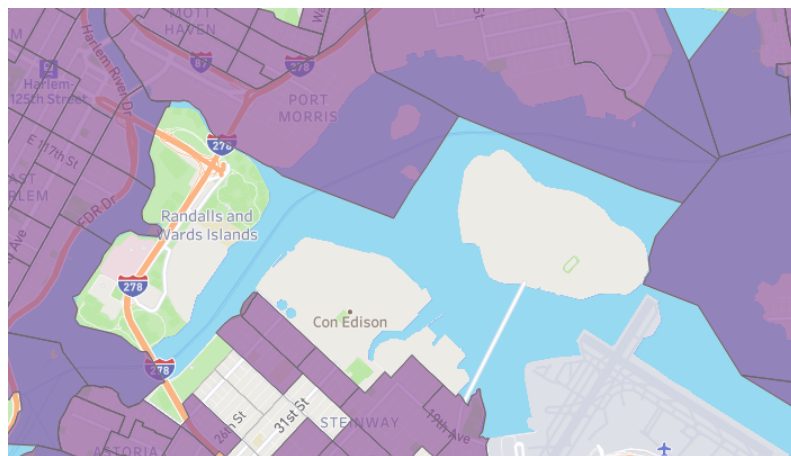
Q: What proposed projects in the Company's filing that would impact AD36?

A: Because Con Edison is a regulated monopoly and the sole gas and electric utility in AD36, all residents and businesses will be affected by the proposed rate increase to the delivery charge of 18.2% for gas and 11.2% for electricity. Additionally, Con Edison wants to extend the life of gas infrastructure in our energy-burdened neighborhood, including \$70.4 million over the next five years in its Astoria LNG Plant. Expanding the gas system rather than expediting the transition to clean, renewable energy will increase greenhouse gasses, affect the respiratory health of our constituents and our climate-related disasters.

Q: Are those projects in or impacting a state-designated Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) or Potential Environmental Justice Areas?

A: Yes. The LNG plant directly borders four state-designated DACs, each with an environmental burden that is 91-99% higher than the state-wide average. The concentration of fossil fuel infrastructure and pollution in this area has led it to be known as "Asthma Alley."

Figure 1. Astoria Disadvantaged Communities Map¹



Q. What issues are addressed in your testimony?

A: We address and argue the following:

¹ NYS Climate Action Council. Disadvantaged Communities Map. 2022.
<https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Disadvantaged-Communities-Criteria/Disadvantaged-Communities-Map>

- **Transparency & Democracy** - Con Edison is the only option for electric and gas service in AD36 and the public must be engaged in the rate process. However, the vast majority of Con Edison customers we interacted with had no idea about the ongoing rate filing. The public engagement for this rate filing is insufficient.
- **Affordability** - Current Con Edison gas and electricity rates are unaffordable, and increasing them will be devastating to too many. The PSC should only approve a plan that lowers current gas and electric rates.
- **Climate Action** - This proposal does too little to address climate issues, especially for all of us in Astoria dealing directly with dirty energy plants. In Con Edison's 2020 rate increase filing, state regulators failed to do their job to protect our constituents and allowed the company to spend an exorbitant amount of money on new fossil fuel infrastructure that did not comply with New York's crucial Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), and instead made huge profits by extending the life of its gas systems. We demand that DPS do a better job of upholding the CLCPA in this rate filing and protecting us from stranded assets.
 - LNG in Astoria: Con Edison has requested to spend \$70.4 million to extend the life of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) cooling tower system facility in Astoria. Every penny of this should be denied. The LNG plant contributes to local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. For the health and safety of our community and the climate, Con Edison should retire, and not invest our money further, into the LNG facility.

Transparency & Democracy

Q: How did you create a testimony that is publicly informed?

A: Our office's testimony is informed by our constituents' concerns, which we collected through widely sharing a Google form.² We based our testimony on the 260 responses we received.

Q: When did you collect these testimonies?

A: In 12 days, our office collected 260 testimonies. We opened the aforementioned form on May 5, 2022 and closed it on May 17, 2022.

Q: How did you conduct outreach for these testimonies?

A: We utilized the following outreach methods:

- An Instagram post on May 9, 2022 on the Assembly Member's instagram
- A tweet on May 9, 2022 on the Assembly Member's twitter
- A robocall sent through the NYS Assembly to 23,891 phones
- An email sent on the listserv of 11,263 constituent emails through the Assembly Constituent Relationship Management System

² <http://bit.ly/coned2022testimony>

- 736 doors knocked in AD36, of which 112 tenants were canvassed
 - If no answer, information about the rate filing was left at their door. If they answered, a conversation was had about the rate filing
- 1000 postcards left at constituents' doors
- 275 post cards distributed to 4 local businesses to distribute to their customers
- Called back 36 constituents who have reached out previously about Con Edison concerns, primarily regarding unaffordability (more details below), and invited them to share more with us through the form

Q: Please provide more details about the robocall.

A: A robocall is an automated pre-recorded call. The call is sent through the New York State Assembly to registered voters in the district who have a phone number on file with the Assembly (which is gathered through the BOE). The Assembly Member recorded the call and it was sent out on 05/04/2022 at 16:30:31, ending on 05/06/2022 at 09:46:09. It was sent to 23,891 targets, with 4,460 answered calls and delivered to 812 people (i.e. the number of people who stayed on the line for the entirety of the call). Furthermore, the call was answered by 13,559 machines, and the message was delivered to 10,597 machines. There were 360 target calls per minute. For the first two hours the robocall was deployed the form was offline (due to administrative error), which may have resulted in a reduction in some constituent testimony submissions.

Q: How does this compare to the outreach for the rate filing?

A: In 12 days, our office has collected 260 public comments, primarily from *our district*, in an effort to make our personal testimony informed and reflective of our constituency. In contrast, between February 3rd and May 19th at 1 pm, PSC has collected 770 public comments for the gas and electric rate filings *across the entire areas affected by the filings*.

All of the constituents we spoke with directly had either 1) not heard about the ongoing rate filing or 2) only heard about the rate filing because of communication from our office.

Furthermore, our office first learned about the rate filing first from Sane Energy. We have received no official communication from either Con Edison or PSC about the ongoing rate filing even though it affects 100% of our constituency.

Additionally, all materials about the rate filing online are in English, which excludes a large portion of the most vulnerable New Yorkers.

All of our constituents are Con Edison customers. The lack of information they have received about the rate increase is concerning. Approving an increased rate without fulfilling public outreach due diligence is undemocratic. This lack of action on the side of Con Edison also comes at the cost of our constituents – especially since almost all the comments we received are in strong opposition to the rate increase.

Q: Please elaborate on the claim that the constituency of AD36 was not informed about Con Edison's ongoing rate filing.

A: Of the 36 constituents we called on the phone, we were the first to inform them of the rate filing. Every constituent we engaged at their door also had not heard about the rate filing before that interaction (with the exception of one constituent who had seen communication from our office).

Several of the form submissions we used to inform our testimony also corroborate this claim:³

"I didn't learn of these proposals through ConEd or PSC. I'm fortunate to have an assembly member who keeps me informed. The lack of transparency on this does not inspire confidence that it won't be directly harmful to myself and my neighbors." - Stephanie Jones

"We didn't know about this proposal – we don't get enough notice when there are increases in rates, and we should get a say in our utilities." - Kevin McDonough

"Why hasn't Con Edison informed us of their intent to raise its rates and its full justification? As a 67-year-old life-long resident of NYC, I deserve a full accounting and full transparency, as does every resident in the City." - Rob Hollander

"The financial burden that Con Ed would impose on customers is compounded by the fact that we receive almost zero notice about these rate hikes. If customers need to budget an additional \$60+ per month for gas and electricity, we need the time to make adjustments in our lives - our budgets, our work hours – to cover this additional monthly expense." - Patrick Grizzard

"If I have to pay all of these rate increases, I should be able to have a say. My neighbors and I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd. The profits gained with lack of civic participation in cases like this one and PSC is allowing them to that so by not making people aware of their right to public participation in this process." - Constituent who has asked to remain anonymous

"Not from Astoria but if I didn't follow Zohran, I would have never been made aware of the proposed hikes in electric & gas prices." - Mahnoor Butt

Q: What would constitute sufficient public outreach?

A: We believe that a sufficient standard of public outreach and engagement must be met before a decision is reached, e.g.:

- Every Con Edison customer receives notification of the ongoing rate filing with:
 - A projection of how much on average their bills will increase based on their prior usage and Con Edison's projections for the future energy prices (this projection approved by an independent third party)

³ Full constituent testimonies are in Appendix A.

- A list of all expenditures proposed for the new revenue, in order of the amount of money budgeted for the project to avoid a biased ordering (e.g. all clean energy projects first, followed by the investments in non-renewable energy)
- Information on how to submit public comment, sign up as a party, and follow the progress of the rate filing
- Material available in the ten most common languages in NYS (details below)
- An in-person outreach campaign
- A sufficiently high quantitative standard of what percentage of Con Edison customers must engage with the rate filing process in order to make the final decision
- An automated call sent to all Con Edison customers
- Publicly available data on how many customers have been reached with any of these tactics

All outreach by Con Edison would be reviewed by an independent party for bias.

Q: Please describe the necessity for language access and precedent.

A: Executive Order 26.1 in March 2021⁴ directs executive state agencies that provide direct public services to offer language assistance services (translation and interpretation) to people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). EO 26.1 amended Executive Order 26, originally issued in October 2011.

There are millions of New Yorkers who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. For these New Yorkers, their LEP status presents potential barriers to accessing important government programs and services.

This standard applies to all executive state agencies. It was created to increase public participation and access. For example, all information about the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) — which crucially provided \$2.3 billion for rental and utility arrears (with an additional \$800 million through this year's budget) — was available in the 10 most common languages.

As of March 15, 2022, 403,045 households⁵ were in arrears for their Con Edison bills, totaling \$840,159,546. In other words, these thousands of households are *already* unable to afford their Con Edison bills — and they will be most impacted by the rate increase. This group is the same population that ERAP was targeted to serve. Thus, just as ERAP was compliant with Executive Order 26.1, all information regarding the rate filings should be as well.

Q: What does Executive Order 26.1 require?

A: Each executive state agency that provides direct public services is required to offer interpretation services to individuals in their primary language with respect to the provision of services or benefits.

⁴ See: <https://www.ny.gov/language-access-policy>

⁵ NYS Department of Public Service. Case Matter 91-M-0744.
<https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/MatterManagement/CaseMaster.aspx?MatterSeq=1331&MNO=91-M-0744>

These agencies are also required to translate vital documents, including public documents such as forms, in the ten most common non-English languages spoken by LEP individuals in the State of New York (based on the most recent United States census data).

The agencies are also required to appoint a Language Access Coordinator and to publish a Language Access Plan.

Q: What are the top ten non-English languages in NYS?

A: At the moment, the top ten non-English languages spoken in NYS are:⁶

- Spanish
- Chinese
- Russian
- Yiddish
- Bengali
- Korean
- Haitian Creole
- Italian
- Arabic
- Polish

Unaffordability

Q: Do you agree with Con Edison's statement that its rate filings include proposals to maintain affordability and mitigate customer bill impacts?

A: No. Con Edison's rates are already unaffordable. As of March 15, 2022, 403,045 households⁷ were in arrears on their Con Edison bills — totaling to \$840,159,546.

Since I have been in office, numerous constituents have reached out who are at risk of a utility shutoff and are struggling to make payments.

Given this affordability crisis, the proposed increase in consumer electric bills by 11.2% and gas bills by 18.2% will create even more dire economic hardship for individuals and families in our district — and beyond.

⁶ Again see: <https://www.ny.gov/language-access-policy>

⁷ NYS Department of Public Service. Case Matter 91-M-0744.

<https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/MatterManagement/CaseMaster.aspx?MatterSeq=1331&MNO=91-M-0744>

We also reject Con Edison's proposal to increase return on equity to 10%. Con Edison's profits should only be determined after all utility arrears are forgiven, a truly affordable rate is given to all customers, and aggressive investments are made in accordance with the CLCPA (see next section).

Q: Please elaborate on the claim that Con Edison's bills are already unaffordable for your constituents.

A: As an office that deals with constituent casework, many of our cases have related to Con Edison affordability (details below). This year, we developed a relationship with the Public Utility Law Project (PULP) in order to support constituents facing shutoffs and arrears. We agree with PULP's evaluation of the harm the rate increase will cause, their critique of the lack of forecasting and communication during the bill surge, the flaws of the low income program, and the need for alternate rate design.

After reviewing the 260 testimonies and our direct experience with constituents, we believe the only way forward is a **rate reduction**. Select quotes from our constituents that inform this call are below:

"I am a 71 year old single woman surviving only on a small monthly Social Security payment. Last year my monthly Con Edison bills were between \$75-\$80, and that was an enormous check out of my available funds... THIS IS INSANE and requires me to cut back in groceries and medications. THIS IS CRUEL !! !! !!" - Leslie Gold

"I'm a registered nurse raising 4 children and my husband lost his job soon after the pandemic began. My husband now takes care of our small children at home who are not yet school age. Putting them in daycare costs more than he would earn in his profession as a cook. We get by, but ConEd rate hikes would not be affordable for us." - Barbara Squeri

"In the past year my wife and I have experienced the death of five family members. We have both contracted COVID, and have both experienced wage and work shortages due to ongoing budget issues related to COVID. We are barely keeping our heads above water. Now, our landlord is announcing a \$200 rent increase, citing his own increase in bills and taxes. He expects us to make up his shortfall from his own ConEd and tax hikes. This rate hike trickles down to the most vulnerable people with the least amount of power." - Constituent who has asked to remain anonymous

"I am 90 years old and have lived in my home for 65 years. I am on a monthly budget - fixed income - and don't know how I will pay for heating and cooling if the prices go up so much." - Maria Toppi

"As a family living on a fixed income the affordability of gas and electricity are our single greatest financial burden behind food and medical care. Electricity consumption reductions from changing to LED light bulbs have been completely offset by continual rate increases. Air conditioning is an essential component of my 93 year old mom's health." - Louis Farucci

"We shouldn't have to wear coats and layers in our apartment just to be able to afford our utility bill. We do not need a rate increase, we need a reduction so citizens aren't freezing in their own homes!" - Kelly Peaks

"It really feels like a "death by a thousand cuts" in terms of price increases every year." - Melissa Toulouse

"I am an 80% service-disabled military Veteran, and living here in New York City is difficult because I have a fixed income from my Veterans' benefits. ConEd's rates for electricity and gas are already too high, and raising them further would be unaffordable for Veterans like me." - Alexander McCoy

"I'm an Astoria resident and small business owner who, like many, had to adapt and make changes to my life and my business through the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. And with prices skyrocketing everywhere, raising gas and electric prices by the proposed magnitude would simply be another nail in the coffin for me, my family, my business and its employees." - Constituent who has asked to remain anonymous

"I am on a level payment plan and the new amount is gonna show up in June. I'm scared bc it's 351 now but it could go up to 600. I'm a senior on a fixed budget. When I call them they won't tell me what that new rate might be. I'm terrified of what is going to happen." - Dominique Perrot

"I live with my two elderly parents & an infant, heating is a necessity that we cannot choose between. We are middle class with a collective income of about 100K/year yet this high of a bill alongside mortgage & other essentials barely cuts it. It's sad how with this high of an income we are still living hand to mouth. A bill hike would definitely make it even harder for us to make ends meet." - Mahnoor Butt

"We Are a family of four - two toddlers. It's been very difficult paying our con Ed bill. We're still trying to pay it off. It comes down to not turning on the heat in order to save money or risk our toddlers getting sick from it being so cold. It's never been this high and our children are suffering because of it." - Constituent who has asked to remain anonymous

"Every single month my stomach drops at the price of my ConEd bill. I have tried so hard to understand why it's so expensive month after month, as we do everything possible to save energy in our apartment - we freeze in the winter and sweat in the summer just to keep our bills semi-affordable, and even then it's so much money." - Julia Schroeder

"Over the past two years, my wages have stayed stagnant while inflation has skyrocketed. I'm finding myself running out of money before every paycheck even though my week to week expenses haven't changed. And my home ConEd bills have gone up, because I'm working from home and cooking more from home. With rents going up, groceries going up, and other prices rising, we can't afford an 18% increase." - Jaya Saxena

"I got laid off at the start of the pandemic and now, two-years later, have only been able to return to part-time work. Even when I worked full-time, my ConEd bill was a major expense, much less now when I have drained my savings account to try and keep up with my bills." - Kyle Winkler

"ConEd bills are already too high. As a 30 year old nursing student on a fixed income, the effects of any increase, regardless of size, will have detrimental effects on my cost-of-living and well-being. Too many times throughout the course of this pandemic, I have had to choose between paying my ConEd bill, purchasing more PPE, or paying living expenses." - Julien DellaPorta

"I simply can't afford it. We have to keep turning off appliances and lowering down the thermostat temperature. We were wearing winter jackets indoors. Can't imagine what this summer's bill is gonna be."

- Constituent who has asked to remain anonymous

Q: Please describe the nature and volume of constituent cases your office received concerning ConEdison bills in 2021 versus 2022.

A: As of today, May 20th, 2022, 25% of our 2022 cases are Con Edison-related matters. This number is in contrast to this time last year when Con Edison cases accounted for 2.8% of our constituent cases. All but two of the Con Edison-related cases our office has dealt with to date relate to high bills (the two outliers concern payment issues and service shutoff.)

Q: How do you account for this difference?

A: The majority of these calls occurred immediately after the bill surge in February. All of these constituents had no idea why their bills increased, which is testament to the lack of effective communication and forecasting on the part of Con Edison. After this bill surge, our office released further communication materials about energy bills, which resulted in more cases. Additionally, as this is our second year in office, general awareness of our services has increased as well. Regardless of these changes, our constituents' energy bills are *unaffordable at current rates*, and the rate filing will only exacerbate this economic hardship.

Q: What is the energy burden of AD36?

A: AD36's average energy burden is 42% with an upper limit of 83% in two in-district census tracts.⁸

Q: What is the asthma emergency department visit vulnerability rate of AD36?

A. The average annual age-adjusted emergency department visits for asthma in AD36 is 59% higher than the state's average.⁹

Q: Did you support utility debt relief in New York's state budget?

A: Yes, including circulating a letter to my colleagues and the Speaker advocating for the final budget to include the creation of the Office of the Utility Consumer Advocate, \$500 million for the Energy Assistance Program, \$500 million for gas and electric utility arrears relief and utility rate case intervenor funds.

Q: Do you call for Con Edison to forgive utility debt? Why or why not?

⁸ NYS Climate Action Council. Disadvantaged Communities Map. 2022.

⁹ Ibid.

A: Yes. Energy is necessary for us to survive and live with dignity. We need energy providers that are resilient through crises and that stay affordable and accessible to those who rely on them. While New Yorkers are struggling to afford the energy they need to survive, Con Edison is continuing to make profit. Con Edison reported net income for common stock of \$1,101 million or \$3.29 a share in 2020, a 2021 net income for common stock of \$1,346 million or \$3.86 a share, and are projecting its adjusted earnings per share to be in the range of \$4.40 to \$4.60 per share in 2022. These profits come from charging consumers more than it takes to buy the energy, distribute it, and employ its workers. Given the public outcry at the unaffordability of the costs this monopoly imposes on its consumers, we believe that forgiving utility debt is the minimum — New Yorkers lives literally depend on it.

Climate Action

Q: What is the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (“CLCPA”)?

A: The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act was signed into law on July 18, 2019. The CLCPA calls for a 40% greenhouse gas emissions reduction by 2030 and 85% reduction by 2050. The CLCPA requires that 70% of New York's electricity come from renewable sources by 2030 and 100% zero emission generation by 2040.

Q: Is the CLCPA applicable to utility rate filings?

A: Yes. The Public Service Commission’s August 12, 2021 Order Approving the Joint Proposal with Some Modifications in Cases 19-G-0309 and 19-G0310 established that Sections 7(2) and 7(3) of the CLCPA apply to rate case decisions.

Q: What does Consolidated Edison claim about its compliance with the CLCPA?

A: The Company claims that its rate filings are consistent with the CLCPA’s emissions goals and does not disproportionately burden disadvantaged communities.

Q: Do you agree?

A: No. The proposed investments in gas facilities and infrastructure will expand and prolong the lives of fossil fuel infrastructure and result in increasing, rather than decreasing, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions now and in the future. Energy is by far the largest source of GHG emissions in NYS, with 76% resulting from combusting fossil fuels, both to generate electricity and for heating and appliances in buildings, and fugitive emissions in production, distribution, and at the site where the energy is used.¹⁰

The project of greatest concern to our constituency is the investment of \$70.4 million over the next five years in its Astoria LNG Plant. The Company describes five areas of investment: 1) \$14 million for

¹⁰ NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. “2021 Statewide GHG Emissions Report.” 2021. Pg. iii. https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/ghgsumrpt21.pdf

Instrumentation upgrade program 2) \$20 million for nitrogen refrigeration cycle replacement 3) \$3.2 million for electrical equipment upgrades and relocation 4) \$5.27 million for equipment integrity projects 5) \$20 million for reliability remediation program.

PSC must keep Con Edison accountable to the CLCPA and prevent any investments in extending the use of fossil fuels.

Q: Please describe the legal history of LNG storage in New York City.

A: New LNG facilities were banned in all of New York State in 1976 following an accident at a Staten Island storage facility that killed 40 workers. In 2015, New York State lifted the ban, but New York City did not, keeping its statutory moratorium in place because of the public safety risk LNG presents in high density areas. The Astoria LNG facility was built before the ban went into place so the facility has been given a certain level of exemption protection since the structures predate applicable zoning restrictions. The Company could not build the Astoria LNG facility today.

This is similar to the fracked gas power plant that NRG was trying to replace in Astoria. This proposal received widespread public opposition, and was stopped by the Department of Environmental Conservation.

Q: Please elaborate on the relation between the NRG power plant and the LNG storage facility.

A: In 2019, NRG restarted an old approval process for a fracked gas replacement plant. The new NRG plant went through the majority of its approval process between 2009, when the plant was proposed, and 2012 when the project was paused. After NRG's first attempt at this project, the landmark 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) became law and New York began requiring new energy construction to undergo the more stringent and community-involved Article 10 process.

When restarting their process, they received an exemption from the Article 10 process, as well as what is fundamentally an exemption from the latest climate regulations since the majority of their approvals happened under 2012 climate regulations, not 2019 climate laws.

The Astoria plant that NRG was proposing to replace will be shut down by 2023 due to new pollution limits passed by New York State. Although NRG was arguing that their new project was less polluting than the existing plant, it is clear that we cannot make any investments in extending the life of fossil fuels compliant with our climate goals.

On Oct 27, 2021, the DEC rejected NRG's proposal to build a fracked gas peaker plant in Astoria – a decision based on the 6,600 public comments they received and an analysis of the environmental impact and necessity of the project.¹¹ Leading up to this decision, our office worked with community members to

¹¹ Notice of Denial from the NYS Department of Conservation can be read here:
https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/nrgastoriadecision10272021.pdf

engage our neighbors about the power plant. We organized over 170 constituents to write 7,875 total postcards to their neighbors informing them of NRG’s proposal. Twenty-two small businesses across our neighborhood handed out palm cards to their customers. And we conducted public events, from educational sessions to rallies and press conferences, to engage constituents (more below).

The legal history of the Astoria LNG facility is similar to the Astoria plant — both were approved under climate regulations that are far from today’s standards.

Con Edison could not build the Astoria LNG facility today. The only appropriate way forward is to retire the facility as soon as possible — not to invest more money into it under the guise of marginal pollution improvements.

Q: Please elaborate on the neighborhood opposition to the NRG power plant.

A: There was widespread opposition to the NRG power plant because our neighbors are worried about air quality and the environment. Both of those concerns are relevant to the LNG storage facility.

Over 200 constituents showed up to rally against the NRG plant. Several elected officials came out in opposition to the plant including: Senator Chuck Schumer, Congressmembers Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Grace Meng, Carolyn Maloney, Nydia Velázquez, Jamaal Bowman, Mondaire Jones, Jerrold Nadler, Yvette D. Clarke and Adriano Espaillat, State Senators Mike Gianaris and Jessica Ramos, Assembly Members including myself and Jessica González Rojas, and City Council Members Costa Constantinides and Tiffany Cabán.

The 6,600 public comments showed overwhelming opposition to the power plant as well.

Because of the history and reasoning for opposition to the NRG plant, it is clear that our constituency would also oppose further investment in the LNG facility.

Q: Is Consolidated Edison’s Astoria LNG plant located in, or would it impact, Disadvantaged Communities?

A: Yes. But outside of the language of disadvantaged communities, it is important to understand what it actually means to live in an area with a large energy burden.

Long Island City and Astoria have higher levels of the most harmful air pollutant, fine particulate matter at 7.8 per cubic meter, than NYC as a whole (7.5) and across the borough of Queens (7.2).¹² Asthma rates are high — the average annual age-adjusted emergency department visits for asthma in AD36 is 59% higher than the state’s average¹³ — and as a result children compare inhalers on their school playgrounds.

¹² NYC Department of Health. “Community Health Profiles: Long Island City and Astoria” 2018.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/data/2018chp-qn1.pdf>

¹³ Ibid.

As noted above, AD36's average energy burden is 42% with an upper limit of 83% in two in-district census tracts.¹⁴

Several of the testimonies we received from our constituents illustrate opposition to the persistent over-representation of fossil fuel power plants and subsequent health burdens in AD36:

"We know we only have a decade, give or take, to significantly cut emissions, we've already experienced a taste of what climate change will bring with Hurricane Ida, and municipalities worldwide have proven that we can make the switch to renewable energy AND that renewable energy now costs less than fossil fuel derived energy from privately owned corporations. It is time we start treating the climate crisis as a crisis and DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. Fleecing the residents of Astoria to pay for dirty energy that harms our health and our children's health is not the answer." - Sue Silverman

"I live a few blocks from the LNG plant and have a child who uses an inhaler for exercise induced asthma. In fact, the number of children in the neighborhood I know who are using inhalers is too numerous to keep track of. This proposal does too little to address climate issues, especially for all of us in Astoria, who deal with the environmental fallout of these dirty energy plants every day. No new money should go toward the further pollution of our neighborhood at the LNG plant." - Amybeth Whissel

"I live so close to Con Ed's gas-fired plant on 14th Street that the dust (fine particulate matter, PM2.5) lays down a thin sheet on top of my furniture, window sill, and surely the lining of my lungs. I developed COPD living here, and remember a teacher testifying when I moved in 23 years ago that in her class of elementary students at P.S. 34 on East 12th Street, every single one of them carried an inhaler. It was shocking. I am sure that the rate increase will be argued to be for enhancing Con Ed's equipment and protecting the grid, but Con Ed's track record is abysmal. During Superstorm Sandy I was speaking with my employer about the safety of our clients (we advocate for residents in adult homes, many of whom live in Coney Island or the Rockaways), and I saw three green flares on top of Con Ed. I thought that was it, that it meant a terrific explosion was about to happen. No, what happened was the lights went off and stayed off for 11 days; there was no water at all for 4 days. The plant had not been properly designed for emergencies and the salt water coming in from the East River had caused a failure. And ironically, the very thing that causes these increasingly numerous and dangerous weather events is in large part due to methane emissions, a greenhouse gas 86 times worse than carbon dioxide in trapping heat, and CO2 is certainly bad enough. We cannot keep using fossil fuels to heat our homes, cook our meals, heat our water. Where is Con Ed in all this? How can they maintain their business at the same time we try to protect the future? I see no true commitment on their part, just a lot of greenwashing. What we need - instead of upping the rates and the rake-ins for the investors, is to remove subsidies from the fossil fuel industry and the profit motive from utilities and to give the power to the public. Nobody should make money off our need for energy. Communities need the encouragement and support to create our own energy - rooftop solar, battery storage, demand response, efficiency." - Judith Canepa

"ConEd's exorbitant rate hikes are made on top of my neighborhood's over-representation of fossil fuel power plants. As a lifelong Astoria resident, my neighborhood suffers from high air pollution and related asthma rates. The summer months will see the unaffordable rates go through the roof and every effort must be made to reduce unaffordable increases which includes reducing the 10% return on equity for ConEd." - Chris Efthimiou

"[My wife,] Jess, is now six months pregnant, and we're dismayed at ConEd's proposal of an abrupt and precipitous rate increase, with no commitment to uphold New York's legal obligation to the CLCPA and

¹⁴ NYS Climate Action Council. Disadvantaged Communities Map. 2022.

moral obligation to fighting for a stable environment for the next generation. That's not an abstraction for us: our next generation is due to arrive in mid-September. We owe it to her to demand more reasonable rates and clearer, more ambitious environmental goals from ConEd." - Ben Beckley

"ConEd claims the rate hike they just proposed will help New York meet our climate goals and keep costs as low as possible – but that's not true. ConEd is still proposing to spend almost \$1 billion a year on investments that will prolong the use of dirty fracked gas and make massive profits off the few clean energy projects they are proposing. New York State: Deny ConEd's egregious rate hike request for electricity and gas and develop a rate plan that actually meets our climate goals while reducing current rates." - Nick Curto

"I am a woman in my thirties, and I have always wanted children, but I feel deeply conflicted about whether I should because the climate crisis is so terrifying that I can't ensure I will be bringing children into a world that can support them. We have the opportunity to take action now and avert this crisis, but individuals can only do so much: the companies in charge of energy MUST take responsibility for their sole ability to make the sizable impacts necessary to save the planet and allow my children to live safely."
- Andrea Grody

"Climate disruption is real; it is here; it is already costing lives worldwide. Close to home, acute environmental pollution from dirty fossil fuel plants is real and causing health problems in Astoria and other neighborhoods. In 2020, ConEd did not comply with New York's crucial Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and instead made profits by extending the life of its gas systems." - Wythe Marschall

"I request that the PSC do a better job in this rate case of upholding the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and protecting us from corporate greed. One of the easiest and most important ways in which the PSC can make a difference is by denying ConEd's request to spend \$70.4million to extend the life of its liquefied natural gas cooling tower in Astoria." - Constituent who has asked to remain anonymous

Appendix

Constituent Testimonies

Maria Toppi

I am 90 years old and have lived in my home for 65 years. I am on a monthly budget - fixed income - and don't know how I will pay for heating and cooling if the prices go up so much. This is a very scary time that I may not be able to afford my gas and electricity.

Louis Farucci

As a family living on a fixed income the affordability of gas and electricity are our single greatest financial burden behind food and medical care. Electricity consumption reductions from changing to LED light bulbs have been completely offset by continual rate increases. Air conditioning is an essential component of my 93 year old mom's health. Furthermore the air quality of Astoria has been severely affected by the two power plants to the north and south. Con ed should be at the forefront of renewable energy source development rather than doubling down on fossil fuel use.

Sue Silverman

My bills over the winter exceeded \$400, an incredible amount to be paying at a time when we need to be moving away from fossil fuels. We know we only have a decade, give or take, to significantly cut emissions, we've already experienced a taste of what climate change will bring with Hurricane Ida, and municipalities worldwide have proven that we can make the switch to renewable energy AND that renewable energy now costs less than fossil fuel derived energy from privately owned corporations. It is time we start treating the climate crisis as a crisis and DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. Fleecing the residents of Astoria to pay for dirty energy that harms our health and our children's health is not the answer. We must at the very least uphold the CLCPA. Climate change and our health, not corporate profits, should be our primary concern. Therefore, I vehemently oppose any plan that raises our rates while prolonging our dependence on fossil fuels.

Xiomara Vance

I am shocked to hear that in this time of record inflation, ConEd wants to raise our household costs further. ConEd has been making higher profits year after year during this pandemic while their customers struggle. It is unacceptable that these rate hikes are being considered without public participation. I want to see a plan that minimizes climate impact, minimizes costs, and the only way that will happen is by PSC and ConEd bringing these backroom deals into the light of day.

Simela Baxevanis

Me and my husband are both retired and we can't pay more money for electricity. please my pension is \$500 and my husband one Thousand how we gonna pay all the bills every month if they increase the electricity and gas!

Ying Wang

With stagnant wages and rising inflation, daily life is increasingly untenable for my household. Current ConEd gas and electricity rates are unaffordable. The PSC should only approve a plan that lowers current gas and electric rates. Otherwise, thousands of honest, hardworking Astorians such as us will suffer and be forced to choose between electricity and food. If we as consumers are expected to pay the burden of rate increases, we should be a part of deciding the future of these cases. My neighbors and I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd.

Jaya Saxena

Over the past two years, my wages have stayed stagnant while inflation has skyrocketed. I'm finding myself running out of money before every paycheck even though my week to week expenses haven't changed. And my home ConEd bills have gone up, because I'm working from home and cooking more from home. With rents going up, groceries going up, and other prices rising, we can't afford an 18% increase. What's more, it's an increase for an infrastructure that requires all of us to use fossil fuels. The climate crisis is the most urgent issue of our time. ConEd needs to do much more to uphold the CLCPA and protect the climate, rather than charge us more for dirty energy.

Patricia Colella

I'm a senior citizen and pay enough taxes and bills and don't get anything back. I've seen the rates go up already and I need the AC during the summer and live on a fixed income. They should take care of the older people because I have a lot of expenses and get no breaks; I don't get any help and I pay all my taxes and bills on time.

Leslie Gold

I am a 71 year old single woman surviving only on a small monthly Social Security payment. Last year my monthly Con Edison bills were between \$75-\$80 , and that was an enormous check out of my available funds. THIS PAST YEAR my bills have been raised to \$105-\$115 even without air conditioning. THIS IS INSANE and requires me to cut back in groceries and medications. THIS IS CRUEL !! !! !!

Amybeth Whissel

I live a few blocks from the LNG plant and have a child who uses an inhaler for exercise induced asthma. In fact, the number of children in the neighborhood I know who are using inhalers is too numerous to keep track of. This proposal does too little to address climate issues, especially for all of us in Astoria, who deal with the environmental fall out of these dirty energy plants every day. No new money should go toward the further pollution of our neighborhood at the LNG plant.

If we as consumers are expected to pay the burden of a rate increase, we should be a part of deciding the future of these cases. My neighbors and I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd. Were it not for local leaders handing out information, me and many in my community would not have had a chance to voice our objections.

Post COVID, many people are only now getting their financial lives back to some sense of normalcy. The loss of advance Child Tax Credit payments coupled with rising food costs, mean an extra \$50 per month in utilities could be the difference in whether that family will be able to eat.

I urge you to stop this proposed rate hike.

Ben Beckley

My wife and I moved to Astoria last year, after over a decade in Park Slope, because we were looking for more space and lower cost of living, as we look to start a family. Jess is now six months pregnant, and we're dismayed at ConEd's proposal of an abrupt and precipitous rate increase, with no commitment to uphold New York's legal obligation to the CLCPA and moral obligation to fighting for a stable environment for the next generation. That's not an abstraction for us: our next generation is due to arrive in mid-September. We owe it to her to demand more reasonable rates and clearer, more ambitious environmental goals from ConEd. We expect New York state to demand accountability and transparency from ConEd for us and for our child.

Kelly Peaks

My electricity bill shouldn't be half of my rent! This winter was one of the coldest on record, and my roommate and I had to turn our heat down down to the lowest it would go just so we wouldn't freeze because our last bill was over \$400! And without notice! We had to wear multiple layers inside our apartment the entire winter. And even when we had the heat the lowest it could be, our bill was still the highest it had ever been in years. We shouldn't have to wear coats and layers in our apartment just to be able to afford our utility bill. We do not need a rate increase, we need a reduction so citizens aren't freezing in their own homes!

Susan Lippman

It is imperative that you reduce costs, rather than increasing them. Your increasing our bills will only severely hurt the health and well-being of most New Yorkers, who can ill afford an increase. Do you care that seniors of fixed incomes like me, as well as many low wages workers and children will have to reduce our intake of healthy foods, if only to reduce your profits, which you use on pipelines and fracked gas, things that literally destroy our environment. It is totally unconscionable that you would even consider raising rates at a time when so many people are suffering.

Also, why have you not notified the public of this outrage and given us so little time to respond? Your lack of transparency is totally suspect.

In order to preserve and even enhance the health and well being of every New Yorker, you must immediately reduce rates, eliminate fracking and pipelines and invest in renewable energy, which will actually help our planet.

It is totally outrageous that you are putting your profits far above the health and well-being of every human being in your area.

Victoria Catandella

As a private homeowner in Astoria (Block 565, Lot 4), I have watched my ConEd bills increase for 37 years. My most recent bill was a whopping \$267.72. This is before we've even turned on an air conditioner. Last year at this same time, my bill was \$171.95. That's almost a \$100 increase. Two years before that in 2019, my bill was \$127.04—a \$50 increase.

How much more can you bleed us?

New York State was supposed to be a leader in the fight against climate change, but Astoria is fighting a fracking gas facility! ConEd should be helping private homeowners convert to solar power to increase our climate resilience. Then with the surplus energy produced, they can subsidize our less fortunate neighbors.

Frederica Sagiani

My ConEd bill has been astronomical this winter, nearly double of what it had been in the past. For example, I paid over \$400.00 of total utilities bill this past November, 2021. My February bill was over \$585.00 for a tiny apartment of 2 small bedrooms. This is crazy! My husband and I are both retirees on a fixed income. We are seriously contemplating leaving Queens and moving to another State. Please deny Con Ed the increase it simply does not deserve. In fact, the City should be doing more to protect its middle class retirees!! We are the marbles of our great city. Also, Con Ed should be mandated to foster solar projects and help us curb the inflation we are facing in all sectors of our lives. Thank You for all you Do.

Patrick Grizzard

As an aspiring actor and filmmaker, I work multiple freelance jobs to pay my rent and bills, on top of auditioning and writing every spare moment I have. New York City can not continue to be a viable home for artists if the cost of living is exorbitant. With rents skyrocketing in every neighborhood of the city, now is not the time for Con Edison to add to the burden of those who are already struggling to make ends meet. The financial burden that Con Ed would impose on customers is compounded by the fact that we receive almost zero notice about these rate hikes. If customers need to budget an additional \$60+ per month for gas and electricity, we need the time to make adjustments in our lives - our budgets, our work hours - to cover this additional monthly expense. For me, it would mean spending more time on freelance work, and less time making art. PSC, help ensure that the artists who sustain our city's reputation as a vibrant, global hub of creativity can continue to afford to live and create here. We need a rate reduction, not an increase! Thank you.

Fatima Sanz

In December 2021 my husband and I bought a multifamily property in Astoria. As first time home owners we did lots of research and were prepared for the responsibility of buying a house. What we didn't expect was that our biggest headaches would be caused by ConEd. During the inspection our electrician flagged we were missing a phase coming into the house and we needed to get ConEd to fix this. This underlying issue caused the following:

- Right after we moved ConEd left daily leaflets on our door saying we had to install smart meters or we would be fined \$100 for every month and line that didn't have a smart meter

- We scheduled the smart meter installation a couple of weeks after moving only to find out that because we had a missing phase they could not install smart meters
- I spent the next three months calling ConEd every other day, spent over 35 hours on the phone and spoke to about 25 customer service reps before one of them realized that the missing phase was due to an outage in 2019 and ConEd had never done permanent repairs to fix it.
- When I finally got an appointment for ConEd to come fix the issue, they missed the appointment and I had to escalate with a manager for them to finally come “as a favor to me”
- During the three months I spent on the phone trying to fix the missing phase, ConEd left weekly leaflets on my door saying I need to install smart meters or I’d be fined, even though the reason I could not install smart meters was their own doing, and they fined my tenants \$100 for not having smart meters which again was cause for about 3 hours on the phone having to explain for the millionth time that the reason we don’t have smart meters is because ConEd had not yet fixed the missing phase
- In the midst of this circus, ConEd issued our second monthly bill for an amount of approx \$2,700 and our third monthly bill in this house for an amount of approx \$800. The first bill was automatically withdrawn from our home expenses account leaving us with \$10 in there. After this incident we suspended autopay. ConEd customer reps suggested perhaps my two bedroom apartment in a small two unit building in Astoria May actually spend this much energy in one month and did not want to find a solution. Because of this, I had to file a complaint of fraud with my bank, they issued me the credit two weeks later and handled the issue with ConEd directly. Once again, this billing issue caused many of the hours I spent on the phone until finally I stumbled upon one capable customer service rep that was able to find the cause and provide a solution.

Over all, ConEd does not exist to benefit the public, instead they exist to benefit from the public. In my experience they are a grossly mismanaged private company that monopolizes a basic good and if the government does not hold ConEd accountable the public will continue to suffer at the expense of wealthy share holders who think about nothing but their pockets. ConEd needs to be held accountable for the services they provide, the impact on the communities they serve, and their impact on the environment before they are allowed to increase their rate.

Andrea Grody

I am a woman in my thirties, and I have always wanted children, but I feel deeply conflicted about whether I should because the climate crisis is so terrifying that I can't ensure I will be bringing children into a world that can support them. We have the opportunity to take action now and avert this crisis, but individuals can only do so much: the companies in charge of energy MUST take responsibility for their sole ability to make the sizable impacts necessary to save the planet and allow my children to live safely. ConEd is responsible for NYC's energy, and we are one of the most populous cities in the world. ConEd must commit to real, bold change in service of clean energy. These current rate hikes are not contributing enough in service of that goal. Instead, they are making it more and more difficult for people like me, a theatre worker who lost all my work during the pandemic, to continue living in New York City. Please

commit to making real change in service of protecting all of us from the devastating impacts of continued use of dirty energy.

Aviram Cohen

I volunteer my time as a member of my buildings co op board. Our build is very diverse in age and employment. At the moment we are planning for how to upgrade our building to comply with LL 97. This law will require buildings to move away from gas heating and cooling and implement electric systems like heat pumps. This will be a major and costly transition. A key piece of this climate focused legislation is that utility rates WILL GO DOWN. This rate increase request by Con Ed is in complete contradiction with how this mandate will work. Con Ed must do more to invest in their own infrastructure. New Yorkers already pay some of the highest rates in the US. This proposal must be rejected to protect working families from baring the brunt of the utilities greed.

Zubair Merchant

It is ridiculous that in the middle of historic inflation, an ongoing pandemic, and a disastrous climate crisis Con Edison is trying to raise the rates for Astorians and NYers and invest in more fossil fuel infrastructure while New Yorkers are asking for cheaper, cleaner energy. Why do we continue to allow this monopolistic corporation to suck billions of dollars from our state's residents and profit off of fossil fuels? Forcing residents to pay hundreds of dollars extra a year for gas and electricity is an immoral proposition, especially in this moment.

Barbara Squeri

I'm a registered nurse raising 4 children and my husband lost his job soon after the pandemic began. My husband now takes care of our small children at home who are not yet school age. Putting them in daycare costs more than he would earn in his profession as a cook. We get by, but ConEd rate hikes would not be affordable for us. We're already paying more this year than any other year. We conserve energy as much as possible, and still our gas and electric almost unaffordable as it is.

On top of this, ConEd wants us to pay more to just continue using dirty energy like liquified natural gas?

Rates need to be lower and energy clean for the health of our children, ourselves and our communities.

Sydney Holmes

ConEd is a service that is both incredibly unreliable and already too high. I am a young female small business owner in Astoria, and in a city that already makes it incredibly difficult to be a business owner, I cannot afford for one of my biggest expenses to become even higher. There are so many individuals who are still recovering from the pandemic, and it is incredible to me that ConEd seems to have carte blanche to raise our rates at any interval it chooses. Soon, it will be financially impossible for an average person to live in New York and pave a way for themselves -- I dread that day.

Wythe Marschall

Dear AM Mamdani and members of the New York Public Service Commission,

I oppose ConEd's unnecessary, undemocratic, and unaffordable rate increase: ConEd is proposing to increase electric bills by 11.2% and gas bills by 18.2%, which translates to \$20.90 more per month for electricity and \$37.88 more per month for gas for the average customer. The current ConEd gas and electricity rates are unaffordable. The PSC should approve only a plan that lowers current gas and electric rates.

Further, we should learn about future such proposals far in advance of their possible implementation. ConEd should have to work with customers to understand what they can actually afford. That is, overall, the PSC should work with ConEd to increase transparency regarding our utilities payments. Bills should not suddenly jump up.

In the long term, the PSC should work to make sure that ConEd is focused on renewable energy and not new fossil fuel infrastructure. Climate disruption is real; it is here; it is already costing lives worldwide. Close to home, acute environmental pollution from dirty fossil fuel plants is real and causing health problems in Astoria and other neighborhoods. In 2020, ConEd did not comply with New York's crucial Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and instead made profits by extending the life of its gas systems.

I request that the PSC do a better job in this rate case of upholding the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and protecting us from corporate greed. One of the easiest and most important ways in which the PSC can make a difference is by denying ConEd's request to spend \$70.4million to extend the life of its liquefied natural gas cooling tower in Astoria. This gas plant contributes to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. For the health of our community and the future of our biosphere, ConEd should retire this facility. New funds should go directly into renewables.

Rajput

We have faced multiple issues with ConEd. As one example, in one of our Affordable Housing buildings for Low-Income New Yorkers, the ConEd bill is above \$46,000.00 with a disconnect notice. Our management company has been requesting ConEd to make sure that the payments they made were applied properly to our account, but to no avail so far. As another example, since June 2019, we have repeatedly requested ConEd to send us copies of statements, invoices and records of deposits, but have not received them. As another example, we have experienced an average on-hold wait time between 15 mins and 2 hours each time we call ConEd, and for each call, we are only allowed to request info about no more than three accounts per call. As another example, in another one of our Affordable Housing building for previously Homeless, when a tenant moves out, the deposit and any credit due on the account that we paid is paid directly to the tenant who moved out, not returned to us, leaving us no way to collect that money.

Judith Canepa

I live so close to Con Ed's gas-fired plant on 14th Street that the dust (fine particulate matter, PM2.5) lays down a thin sheet on top of my furniture, window sill, and surely the lining of my lungs. I developed

COPD living here, and remember a teacher testifying when I moved in 23 years ago that in her class of elementary students at P.S. 34 on East 12th Street, every single one of them carried an inhaler. It was shocking. I am sure that the rate increase will be argued to be for enhancing Con Ed's equipment and protecting the grid, but Con Ed's track record is abysmal. During Superstorm Sandy I was speaking with my employer about the safety of our clients (we advocate for residents in adult homes, many of whom live in Coney Island or the Rockaways), and I saw three green flares on top of Con Ed. I thought that was it, that it meant a terrific explosion was about to happen. No, what happened was the lights went off and stayed off for 11 days; there was no water at all for 4 days. The plant had not been properly designed for emergencies and the salt water coming in from the East River had caused a failure. And ironically, the very thing that causes these increasingly numerous and dangerous weather events is in large part due to methane emissions, a greenhouse gas 86 times worse than carbon dioxide in trapping heat, and CO2 is certainly bad enough. We cannot keep using fossil fuels to heat our homes, cook our meals, heat our water. Where is Con Ed in all this? How can they maintain their business at the same time we try to protect the future? I see no true commitment on their part, just a lot of greenwashing. What we need - instead of upping the rates and the rake-ins for the investors, is to remove subsidies from the fossil fuel industry and the profit motive from utilities and to give the power to the public. Nobody should make money off our need for energy. Communities need the encouragement and support to create our own energy - rooftop solar, battery storage, demand response, efficiency.

Also, and speaking very locally again, since I moved here, people have died, one person in this neighborhood alone from stepping on a live Con Ed street grate. Just last night the plant sent out thundering booms for a good half hour, letting off steam - literally. I've not seen any outreach literature or other media from Con Ed about the proposed rate increase, nor have my friends and neighbors. If Con Ed expects to increase the bottom line for their investors, making money off of us as captive ratepayers, I counter that we cannot keep filling their pockets while the earth overheats. I object strongly to this unconscionable hike in our rates and demand that Con Ed develop a real plan to protect our own pockets at this continuing crisis of a pandemic and the even greater looming crisis of catastrophic climate change. Or else deny the increase. Thank you.

Hieger Zosike

For a person living solely on Social Security, the current ConEd rates are already a stretch. Any increase will be an insufferable hardship--because it's not just ConEd raising rates--it's rent, food, transportation, and heaven forbid, any kind of amenity to make life livable as opposed to merely survivable. Perhaps, since NYC is ostensibly the city of the rich and we hangers-on who are too old or poor to move are still amongst the privileged, the upper middle class, wealthy and obscenely wealthy who have historically inhabited New York should take on some of the burden. ConEd should create a sliding scale for lower and middle-income households. BE CREATIVE!

Furthermore, lower- and middle-income people who live in this city must endure a constant barrage of insults from utilities companies. I demand that ConEd should:

- Address climate issues by providing sustainable, affordable fuel sources.

- Inform clientele of rate increases in a timely fashion and allow them to be part of the process through civic participation.
- And last but not least, after tearing up our beloved Lower East Side Park and executing those innocent trees, ConEd should be skulking around in shame rather than flaunting its illicit power over the denizens of the most influential city in the country. But then, what can you expect of a monopoly? Shame, ConEd, shame on you!

Katlyn Hershman

For a city that has barely recovered from COVID, and a company like ConEd who ends every year in surplus, I believe ConEd should not raise prices on New Yorkers. With prices being raised in every sector from groceries to child care to education to the 6% rent hike on rent stabilized apartment: (not to mention those that are unregulated increasing at rates up to 50%) we do not need anymore greed in companies that hold power over peoples basic needs. (Gas,electric, food, water, housing)

STOP MILKING THE PUBLIC FOR PROFITS we need a rate reduction not an increase!

Alexander McCoy

I am an 80% service-disabled military Veteran, and living here in New York City is difficult because I have a fixed income from my Veterans' benefits. ConEd's rates for electricity and gas are already too high, and raising them further would be unaffordable for Veterans like me. Furthermore, my number one issue as a resident here is Climate Change, and I urge the PSC to force utilities to develop a plan that invests in clean, renewable energy, not dirty, polluting fossil fuels that poison my air and contribute to global catastrophe affecting me and my children. Any investment in or prolonged use of natural gas, coal, or other fossil fuel power generation causes harm to my community, and charging us higher prices for it is rubbing salt in the wound.

Eryka Sajek

I'm a public school worker who has lived in New York for twelve years now. I enjoy my job, especially the security that comes along with it. Unfortunately my salary can only increase 1 or 2 percent per year due to taxing infrastructure of school budgets. Public school workers like me are already struggling to make ends meet, especially in this current economy. Monthly expenses like ConEd gas and electricity are basically unaffordable, and not a luxury I can cut out of my budget.

I was recently made aware about a proposal to increase current gas and electric rates. As a resident and worker of this city, I should have a say in my utilities. The PSC should only approve a plan that lowers current gas and electric rates.

Furthermore, this proposal does too little to address climate issues, especially for all of us in Astoria dealing directly with dirty energy plants next door to our beautiful parks. It breaks my heart to watch my five year old neighbor play on his little league team on a field overshadowed by a plant polluting the air he breathes.

In ConEd's 2020 rate hike case, state regulators failed to do their job to protect us and allowed the company to spend a lot of money on new fossil fuel infrastructure that did not comply with New York's crucial Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. DPS needs to do a better job in this rate case of upholding the CLCPA. You need to deny ConEd's request to spend \$70.4million to extend the life of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) cooling tower system facility in Astoria . The LNG plant contributes to local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. For the health and safety of our community and the climate, ConEd should retire the facility and not invest our money into it.

I urge you to deny ConEd's egregious rate hike request for electricity and gas and develop a rate plan that actually meets our climate goals while reducing current electricity rates.

Jean Marie RA Dalleva

Been progressively going up. Being a senior on fixed income it's difficult. Its putting a strain on us, and the city is making mandates like I had to pay a plumber to check the gas line. Con Ed did inspect it when they installed a new meter but didn't give me power work submit to the building dept so I had to get a private plumber and submit it and pay \$700 for that. People don't have never ending funds and everything is going up like cable and water. We didn't have to pay for these utilities before. Incomes aren't going up proportionately to services. COVID also put a big strain financially on people. How much can the poor and working class afford? My husband and I worked two jobs to buy this house and now can barely afford to keep it. Sometimes I have to decide if I can afford to buy and eat meat or if I can only afford to eat pasta for 3 days.

Calogera Downing

My mother is living on a fixed income so how are we supposed to afford that bill? I am a single mom of 2 and grandma of 5 and I rent my apartment so I don't understand how I'm supposed to pay this much. The electricity dims, gas is exploding, manhole fires etc. What are they doing with the money they're taking? We have other retired folks in this building on a fixed income and we aren't getting anything in return.

Esther Lee

My husband was able to lock down a different rate because he works in the energy sector but other people don't know how to do that. There's no reason for them to hike rates except for profit.

Dominique Perrot

I am on a level payment plan and the new amount is gonna show up in June. I'm scared bc it's 351 now but it could go up to 600. I'm a senior on a fixed budget. When I call them they won't tell me what that new rate might be. I'm terrified of what is going to happen.

Reverend Sara Giron-Ortiz

It makes nyc more unaffordable with everything else going up. Even as a nonprofit which the church is, it takes away money for ministry and the community to go towards other things while this company and others are making record profits.

Kevin McDonough

We didn't know about this proposal – we don't get enough notice when there are increases in rates, and we should get a say in our utilities. ConEd has requested to spend \$70.4million to extend the life of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) cooling tower system facility in Astoria . Every penny of that should be denied. The LNG plant contributes to local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. For the health and safety of our community and the climate, ConEd should retire the facility and not invest our money into it.

Hannah Scarritt-Selman

As a school teacher who has had to work all through the pandemic, it is criminal to a) assume the panic strains are finished b) that the increase in rate will not be detrimental to families throughout NYC. Rather than seeing this as an opportunity for a price increase, CON ED should look for ways to better serve the city residents. We cannot afford to pay the spiked rates anymore.

Ashley Vazquez Moreno

The increase in con ed bills is unfair to the all of NYC residents, but mostly unfair to the working class who already struggle with working pay check to paycheck. By implementing such a raise, the cycle of poverty is deepened for the underprivileged. It should also be noted that by implementing such a raise, it'll further divide economic classes as more resources and time will be dedicated to make up for the increased cost. Thus ultimately, dividing the working and upper class.

Rebekah Prins

It feels like we're already paying a lot and it just went up a lot. It's just too much when everything else is jumping up. Con Ed jumped much higher over night like 13% from one month to another we can't already be getting another hike.

Kyle Winkler

I got laid off at the start of the pandemic and now, two-years later have only been able to return to part-time work. Even when I worked full-time, my ConEd bill was a major expense, much less now when I have drained my savings account to try and keep up with my bills. It is baffling to me that ConEd wants to raise our rates during a time where so many individuals, myself included, and our city as a whole is still recovering from the shocks of COVID-19; and even worse, that the Public Service Commission might allow them to. PSC: you must use this opportunity to reduce our rates, not allow ConEd to increase them.

Niki Williams

As a Brooklynite with a great job and no children, you would think I would be able to afford a weekly night out. A Broadway show once a quarter. Maybe buy some local coffee in the morning. Maybe donate to mutual aid funds and volunteer.

But no- I work a 9-5 and then a second job nights and weekends just to cover the basic necessities. Exploding post-pandemic rent and electric bills. The electric bill have skyrocketed to \$300-\$400 in months where I traveled away from home and \$500-\$600 in the winter working from home. I freeze in the winter and swelter in the summer in an effort to do my part. But this. This is untenable. How are regular

hardworking people supposed to actually live a and participate in community if it all goes to keeping the lights on?

This entire situation has me very depressed. I feel trapped and alone and like what little small joys I had are taken away. I suppose I could leave this great city, but the job I just got requires me to live here. I've been working for this opportunity for 20 years. It is absolutely wild to think that I have to consider giving it up because of an electric bill. Why is this ok? How is this ok? What does our government leadership think people like me should do? I make too much for assistance programs, but would need to make significantly more money to afford this. Also. Why must I be uncomfortable in the apartment that has already raised the rent \$500? Please do something. You must do something. Please. We are begging you.

Eileen Myles

I've lived in the east village for 40 plus years and have never seen any indication that Con Ed is interested in thinking about green energy, rethinking fossil fuel or the enormous burden of pollution you have historically put on the neighborhood. Now on top of all that you want a rate hike. My bills mysteriously went up this year while I have spent less time in my apartment. And I have used east river park all the years I live in the area and Con Ed is single handedly responsible for the destruction of trees in service of making parking for your trucks! That is so evil and underhanded. Originally the better plan for ESCR was shelved because you didn't want to move your wires. Now trees are being destroyed on the green way to facilitate your work. I do not want to give a penny more to you guys who only hurt the neighborhood. You're really a disgrace.

Vanessa Carney

I'm a freelancer. Most of my jobs dried up by February. Even when I worked full-time, my ConEd bill was a major expense, much less now when I have drained my savings account to try and keep up with bills. It is baffling to me that ConEd wants to raise our rates during a time where so many individuals, myself included, and our city as a whole is still recovering from the shocks of COVID-19; and even worse, that the Public Service Commission might allow them to. PSC: Do not fall into their scam.

Brandy Phillips

I saw a price hike early this year \$130 to \$185 without extra usage and this happened last year too. Another \$60 a month would definitely be a hardship.

Guillermo Siminiani

My bills have already gone up. I didn't even know the prices went up and I had to use electricity in winter and I wasn't aware the price had gone up. I'm in a position where I can afford a hike but big corporations are making huge profits and con Ed isn't a poor business it obviously makes a lot of money and it would help a lot if the price went down.

Rachel Cañas

Rates are already crazy high. New Yorkers pay the highest energy costs in the country, another rate hike to increase con Ed profits is absolutely shameful and will further hurt New Yorkers impacted by the

pandemic. We already have the highest housing prices we've ever seen (and the largest rent increased for both stabilized and market rate tenants), further price gouging for utilities is indefensible. The city and state need to audit and regulate Con Ed and block this rate hike. Stop exploiting New Yorkers!!

Carolynn Karp

I got laid off at the start of the pandemic and now, two-years later have only been able to return to part-time work. Even when I worked full-time, my ConEd bill was a major expense, much less now when I have drained my savings account to try and keep up with my bills. It is baffling to me that ConEd wants to raise our rates during a time where so many individuals, myself included, and our city as a whole is still recovering from the shocks of COVID-19; and even worse, that the Public Service Commission might allow them to. PSC: you must use this opportunity to reduce our rates, not allow ConEd to increase them.

Jason Papas

We cannot be expected to pay such high rate increases with nothing in return as well as with no communication from ConEd nor PSC as to why any such increases are necessary. How is it that ConEd is requesting a rate increase during a pandemic when most people are working from home and trying to keep their jobs and a smile on their face? How is it that ConEd is out of sync with their customers?

Julien DellaPorta

ConEd bills are already too high. As a 30 year old nursing student on a fixed income, the effects of any increase, regardless of size, will have detrimental effects on my cost-of-living and well-being. Too many times throughout the course of this pandemic, I have had to choose between paying my ConEd bill, purchasing more PPE, or paying living expenses. PSC cannot allow ConEd to continue lining their pockets. We are still living through a pandemic and suffering the physical, mental, and financial burdens that come with it. PSC must do what is right and protect us against this predatory behavior.

Dimitri Akrivos

ConEd bills are already too high. As a 49 year old on a part time salary in academia, the effects of any increase, regardless of how small or big, will have detrimental effects on my ability to pay my rent, student loans and health insurance premiums and will make more difficult to set aside money for a rainy day and retirement. Too many times throughout the course of this pandemic, I have had to wonder whether I can afford the cost of living in NYC. We are still living through a pandemic and suffering the financial burdens that come with it. PSC should deny ConEd's rate hike and only approve a plan that lowers current gas and electric rates.

Jennifer Brunker

ConEd bills are already far too high, and only increasing - in the last few months they've increased my rate by over 300% with no explanation! Consumers should be given say in what climate initiatives are approved, given detailed proof AHEAD OF TIME as to where the money is going, and if (when) ConEd fails to deliver on approved climate initiatives, there need to be consequences. ConEd is wasteful - their contractor (Southern Cross) sent 4 separate people to my apartment to try to schedule an appointment to change our meter AFTER an appointment had already been scheduled! I don't even want to know how

much money ConEd has wasted on this redundant, mismanaged project while crying to the state that they need to raise prices. PSC: DO NOT allow ConEd to further burden New Yorkers already struggling to stay afloat! Climate action is essential - predatory ConEd profits are not.

Brian Kleve

These rate increases are obviously and grossly unjust. A minimum of research shows that ConEd is already ludicrously profitable, for instance this press release:

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/con-edison-reports-2021-earnings-301485338.html>

Attempting to raise rates on a public utility in the name of investments in green energy is overtly cynical. There is no reason whatsoever for a public utility to balance its books upon the backs of NYC's poorest residents with obscene rate hikes while generating billions in profits for its shareholders.

It is clear from the enormous profits generated by this enterprise that this public utility has lost a sense of its mission, which is to generate affordable, clean energy for working NYC families. It is instead being run as an investment vehicle, whose mission is to increase dividends and profits for its shareholders. This represents a gross violation of the trust placed in a public utility.

If ConEd's executives have so lost a sense of their mission, then they should be immediately fired and replaced by executives that understand the mission of a public utility.

Shame on ConEd's cynical maneuvering here in the name of clean energy. New Yorkers deserve clean energy, but not at the cost of obscene rate hikes while protecting profitability above all else. Run this company in a manner in keeping with its responsibility to the public trust.

Jordan Revon

ConEd should not be allowed to raise their rates. For a company that made over a billion dollars in profits in 2021 (per Fortune magazine), they make more than enough money to fund their own projects without squeezing us for every last cent. They nickel-and-dime Astorians, the very people they continue to poison every day with their liquified natural gas (LNG) cooling tower system in the neighborhood. They charge "delivery fees" - which they argue are necessary because it costs them money to deliver energy to your house - but these fees often exceed the actual cost of the energy being used. Even worse, instead of re-investing those exorbitant profits into cleaner energy to reduce the air pollution they generate, or making their delivery infrastructure more sustainable (and reducing the cost of those delivery fees), they give that money to the shareholders and executives. As someone who wants to raise a family here and continue living in New York City, my wife and I worry for our child's future growing up in one of the neighborhoods with the worst air pollution in the city - the direct cause of which is ConEd.

Sarah Golden

New York is expensive enough as is. Rent and potential subway fares are going up. Gas prices are already up especially for those who drive and we need to take into account outages and response time from coned

in the past. They already have a monopoly. With past experiences we've had their estimations that are totally off and we're annoyed.

Karolina Dawson

This is unacceptable increase! How are we the consumers supposed to bear the burden of this? I won't be able to make my payments anymore. Already struggling but this hike will push me over the line

Mahnoor Butt

Not from Astoria but if I didn't follow Zohran, I would have never been made aware of the proposed hikes in electric & gas prices. We recently bought our 1st house in Bronx & every winter our ConEd bills goes over \$600 just because of heating. To counter that, we invested in electric heaters & bill still didn't go down. I live with my two elderly parents & an infant, heating is a necessity that we cannot choose between. We are middle class with a collective income of about 100K/year yet this high of a bill alongside mortgage & other essentials barely cuts it. It's sad how with this high of an income we are still living hand to mouth. A bill hike would definitely make it even harder for us to make ends meet. I am still very privileged but I could only imagine how other New Yorkers making minimum wage afford living with such high bills that are about to get even higher if we don't do anything about it.

Ryan Ross

For two years, Con Ed never sent anyone out to read the meter at my apartment. I paid every month, on time and (I assumed) in full; then, last year, they installed a smart meter and promptly charged \$1,700 to my card with no warning and no notice that I owed this amount. I could not afford this charge, and when I called to see if I could work out a balanced billing arrangement instead, I was told "Well we charged you already" and offered no other alternatives. It dramatically affected my household finances and my ability to pay all my other bills.

Con Ed must not be allowed to charge a penny more than they already do; if anything, they should be charging less. The proposed rate hike is nothing short of extortionate and it should be flatly and unequivocally rejected.

Donna Bruschi

If we as consumers are expected to pay the burden of rate increases, we should be a part of deciding the future of these cases.

No one I know got that information about this case through PSC or through ConEd. ConEd profits from lack of civic participation in cases like this one and PSC is allowing them to do so by not demanding further public participation in this process. Simply put, requesting a rate increase during a pandemic makes clear how out of touch ConEd is with its consumers. We need a rate reduction, not an increase.

Rachel Taylor

This proposal does not do enough to fight climate change and also passes the bulk of the cost to the consumer. This is not surprising, ConEd basically has a monopoly on electric and gas in NYC and at the bare minimum consumers should be a part of the decision making process.

Catherine Riley

Already my electric bill is very high and I just had for the 2nd year in a row I was billed in Feb or March they sent me an extra bill after they didn't read the meter they billed me an estimate then gave me an extra bill. I'm already paying as much as I can afford to pay. I can't predict how much the bills will be.

Timothy Wilson

In 2018 we did the predicted bill and it turned out higher than the prediction and we got a retroactive bill. There are better solutions than raising rates on people. Paying an extra \$60 a month would definitely be bad for our neighborhood.

Melissa Toulouse

I'm a New York City transplant, have been here in Astoria for 8 years. When I moved to Astoria I did so because of the family feel and affordability. During those 8 years everything has gone up in price, rent, transportation, gas and electricity. Astoria is unfortunately becoming less and less affordable and I worry about the viability about continuing to live here. It really feels like a "death by a thousand cuts" in terms of price increases every year that lead to pricing out a lot of residents. I love Astoria and want to keep living here but worry about being able to afford to do so if these price increases keep happening.

James Burke

ConEd Bills are too high. I'm getting charged for the hook of my gas when I've not even used my gas to cook anything. And now they want to bump the price up again? This needs to stop. We the people must have a say in when these utility prices increase and we need an answer for when they will decrease. Everything gets more expensive in New York City but the quality remains the same. If all the New Yorkers were expected to make due with less during the pandemic, ConEd should be no exception.

Jesse Goldin

Affordability - Current ConEd gas and electricity rates are unaffordable. The PSC should only approve a plan that lowers current gas and electric rates. In your testimony, you can explain how the unaffordable rates affect you and your household.

Transparency & democracy: We didn't know about this proposal – we don't get enough notice when there are increases in rates, and we should get a say in our utilities.

Climate action - This proposal does too little to address climate issues, especially for all of us in Astoria dealing directly with dirty energy plants. In ConEd's 2020 rate hike case, state regulators failed to do their job to protect us and allowed the company to spend a lot of money on new fossil fuel infrastructure that did not comply with New York's crucial Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and

instead made huge profits by extending the life of its gas systems. We demand that DPS do a better job in this rate case of upholding the CLCPA and protecting us from stranded assets.

LNG in Astoria - ConEd has requested to spend \$70.4million to extend the life of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) cooling tower system facility in Astoria . Every penny of that should be denied. The LNG plant contributes to local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. For the health and safety of our community and the climate, ConEd should retire the facility and not invest our money into it.

Hans Friedrichs

An 11% increase would hit me financially incredibly hard, My life and financial stability like a lot of New Yorkers has still not recovered and the rising rate of general inflation has not helped at all. I was laid off for two years during the pandemic so this is a tough time for me.

Laura McCormack

As a student on a fixed budget, increasing Con Ed bills have definitely had a negative impact on me and my ability to afford the cost of living in Astoria. The recently increased utility bills have forced me to choose between paying utilities and other necessary expenses. Con Ed is choosing to hike their rates at a time when me and my working class neighbors are still recovering from the effects of the COVID 9 pandemic. Please do not allow Con Ed to continue lining their pockets and harming our neighborhood with hiked rates.

Helen Ritter

As a senior citizen living on social security another rate hike is going to hurt my finances because I live on a fixed income and the cost of living keeps going up and up especially right now.

Chris Efthimiou

ConEd's exorbitant rate hikes are made on top of my neighborhood's over-representation of fossil fuel power plants. As a lifelong Astoria resident, my neighborhood suffers from high air pollution and related asthma rates. The summer months will see the unaffordable rates go through the roof and every effort must be made to reduce unaffordable increases which includes reducing the 10% return on equity for ConEd. Furthermore, NY State must turn away from polluting fossil fuels and transition with great urgency toward renewable sources of energy. Doing so should not require high investment returns and subsequent unaffordable costs to consumers.

Herta Fuchs

With everything else going sky high and everything else going on in the world this is the last thing we need. They just did a rate hike I got a 6 month retroactive increase bill and I'm sure it's tough for people with families and children to meet those bills.

Autumn Whitefield-Madrano

Like roughly 80% of people in my neighborhood, I rent my housing. This limits my ability to purchase efficient appliances such as heating, cooling, and refrigeration. Raising energy costs essentially penalizes

all of us—particularly renters, who can control their energy expenditures but not necessarily their energy efficiency.

Jessica Wong

Power and gas are fundamentals to daily quality of life and especially unexpected rate hikes like the one a couple months ago are jarring because we're paying customers. so when the bills are suddenly twice as big is ridiculous. There has to be a better way to notify us because we're trusting them as a utility to give us the service for us to live.

Victoria Morrell

ConEd bills are already too high. These proposed rate hikes put working class Astorians in an impossible situation. Many are forced to decide whether they want to pay their utility bills or put food on their family's tables. We cannot afford to make these choices. New Yorkers deserve better.

Floor Grootenhuis

Coned get more and more expensive without justification and without a proper process of explanation or consultation with the public. You don't get rewarded for saving electricity, there is no incentive. The meter system and usage is so convoluted.

Sara Lynn Ianni

Rates are already pretty high. There is no transparent in the pricing and there's definitely no transparency which is messed up. Retroactive billing is confusing and this is coming from someone with a masters degree. I can't imagine how confusing it is for others too.

Laura Fischer

While I might not be affected too much, they shouldn't do this to our neighbors. It's not fair for anyone. There should be a sliding scale or subsidies then other people would be willing to pitch in to make sure their neighbors can afford it but it's bordering on unaffordable now.

Andrea Renaud

I was laid off in March of 2020. I am currently earning 1/3 of the salary I had before Covid! Everything is going up. I don't know what to do anymore or where to turn. If the ConEd bill goes up even more I will not be able to live here. This is out of control. Please stop this. Do we even have a choice in Astoria? Is there another energy provider with better rates ??

Sara Levine

ConEd rates are already very expensive, and there is no justification for raising the rates so significantly while prolonging the use of fracked gas. I am still working from home every day and I have seen my bills go up during the pandemic. I can't afford to have them increase any more.

Frances Rappa

In Feb when the bill came in it went up by \$500. With the Mitsubishi heating and cooling system (run on electricity) our electric bill went up \$400 for a month and they didn't explain why because we didn't use it that much. Our neighbor has also had an issue with their bill going astronomically up one month without an explanation. A lot of people in this area are retired seniors living in their own homes on a fixed income and they can't afford constant rate hikes.

Michael Muratore

Paying more is gonna be bad. They've already doubled our bill in a month and you can't plan for that. It throws a wrench into our budget. I would also rather move towards green energy than Con Ed.

Francis Salonga

One way it affects us is that we have less money to eat our and support local businesses as coned would be paid more. Flow of money through local business is better for growth. Our rates already spiked last year and it increased significantly, we had to cut our budget all around to make up for it

Alexandra Hersgberger

Con Ed has gotten more expensive recently. As a senior on a fixed income it impacts my budget immensely. I wouldn't be able to afford a \$60 month increase.

George Augustato

During winter I was paying \$900 a month for heating which is 3 times what it used to be. I was paying 5k per year now I'm gonna be paying 7 or 8k. If it increases again I'll have to pass it to my tenants and it would make inflation worse.

Amena Kalam

Everything else is more expensive like groceries but income is not increasing that way so it's hard to pay more money for utilities now.

Mohammad Rahman

Con Ed has already gone up about \$100 per month. I'm already impacted by inflation and rising gas costs and don't want to see utilities go up again.

Patricia Bagpy

Prices have been incredibly high. I've had to lower my thermostat to save money and it gets chilly at night.

Chris Schartrand

I was concerned seeing my last bill because it was \$400 and was \$250 before. I'm very opposed to this. Especially with inflation they can't just keep hiking utility rates.

Carey MacLaren

I work from home so the cost of running my business is now higher. Inflation is through the roof. If it's for infrastructure how is it not through the government? We need green infrastructure. Infrastructure isn't just roads stop signs and prisons. We need the build public renewables act, not con Ed. They also charge my partner \$100 every month because her landlord hasn't installed the new smart meter but how is that her fault? Con Ed is the worst

Inga Boguslavsky

ConEd bills are already too high. As a 60 year old person on a fixed disability income, the effects of any increase, regardless of how small or big, will have detrimental effects on my health and well-being. Too many times throughout the course of this pandemic, I have had to choose between paying my ConEd bill, purchasing more PPE, or even being able to afford a my medication that I must take daily. PSC cannot allow ConEd to continue lining their pockets. We are still living through a pandemic and suffering the physical, mental, and financial burdens that come with it. PSC must do what is right and protect us against this predatory behavior.

Daniel Merrill

We don't have a choice. I don't wanna pay more for electricity, it's a public utility it should be paid for by taxes there's no reason why they should raise rates because of Russias war on Ukraine or for another reason, its their cost of business. They shouldn't be in it for profit since its a public utility. I would support the build public renewables act instead

Edward Jones

We should have options for our utilities- especially our power- and ConEd's business practices are confusing, unfair and purposefully clandestine. I should be able to understand exactly how my bill is calculated, and I can't. I should be able to see how my peer use is trending in a given month and I can't. I should be able to get reliable, easy to use deets and and read bills and I can't! ConEd has never proven they are a well-run company and my bill's increases in the past two years have been something to behold. In the winter- my building has moved to electric heat for all residents- I am now shouldering the entire heat bill in addition to rents that are already too high. Landlords have passed the buck to tenants because it seems no one, not even landlords with all THEIR power in nyc, can stop coned from just gouging constituents. Our neighborhood is also besieged by coned facilities and we don't need more of them, or to double down on them. These hikes are unjustified, undeserved and wrong.

ConEd do better!

Alana Abel

Delivery charges are already unreasonable if you don't use much because it's a fixed cost. Can't imagine lower income residents paying a higher rate on top of the already unreasonable delivery charge.

Iqbal Hussain

It would be really tough for us to pay extra \$60 per month. Our bills go very high in the summer and winter and we got a retroactive bill from 2020 too.

Julia Schroeder

Every single month my stomach drops at the price of my ConEd bill. I have tried so hard to understand why it's so expensive month after month, as we do everything possible to save energy in our apartment - we freeze in the winter and sweat in the summer just to keep our bills semi-affordable, and even then it's so much money. The recent spikes in our bills have hit hard, especially after our landlord raised rent (for which heat/hot water/gas/electricity is not included). When I tell my friends how much money I spend on ConEd each month they freak out. I've tried so hard to understand why it's so high but no one can help. My partner hasn't paid his part of utilities in 2022 yet, as he's still trying to rebound from work affected by covid. Rate increases on top of all of this is absolutely preposterous. I'm so fed up with ConEd. I have to seriously consider every time I cook something! When I found out that ConEd is using this influx of \$\$ for its LNG and other bull crap that does nothing but increase fossil fuels (after Astoria is already littered with polluting plants) I was incredibly frustrated. I sincerely hope ConEd makes this right - if it's anything but lowering rates it's the wrong move.

Lindsey Simmons

Utilities is deeply confusing. Usually my bill ain't too bad but at the end of the year I get a \$400 bill and I don't understand how or where it comes from but I pay it. They will sometimes then credit part of it towards future bills but don't explain how it works. I definitely don't want to pay more.

Alexander Byrnes

I think there's enough of a squeeze on NYC residents as is. Especially Astoria with families who have enough expenses. It's the type of utility that should be public. I just looked at my bill and am surprised by the price already.

Katie Smalling

My rates already went up. We already pay now what we would pay in the summer with the AC. Would rather see green energy

Johnson Samuel

We are able to pick a supplier from open competitive market for supply of gas and electricity. The monopoly of delivery charges by Con Edison is a ripoff and consumers are always the victim of a greedy company. This proposed increase will badly affect the daily life of NYC residents. Put an end to this greed.

Fan Hon

We're retired and living on a fix income. Please don't increase our electric bills by 11.2% and gas bills by 18.2%. That's \$20.90 more per month for electricity and \$37.88 more per month for gas. We can't afford it!!!

Jordyn Boscia

If we as consumers are expected to pay the burden of rate increases, we should be a part of deciding the future of these cases. My neighbors and I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd. ConEd profits from lack of civic participation in cases like this one and PSC is allowing them to do so by not demanding further public participation in this process. Simply put, requesting a rate increase during a pandemic makes clear how out of touch ConEd is with its consumers. We need a rate reduction, not an increase.

Edgar Casillas

For everyone on a fixed income it's tough right now and I get a sense that with gas for example the oil companies are taking advantage of inflation. From an ecological perspective we have to transition from fossil fuels as well.

Maria Kollaros

Con Ed bills are already expensive enough. Con Ed has an unacceptable monopoly and the city clearly doesn't care about its residents because it allows Con Ed to operate. We need green energy. The environment is dying. New York needs to be better.

Callan Slavin

I've seen rates go up last year and it's very frustrating when it gets passed in to neighbors when corporations are using energy. Mayor and Governor are telling us to conserve energy when it's 95 degrees. We got a prorated bill in 2020. We don't have access to the meter. We would prefer green energy for sure.

Caitlin McNaughton

During COVID the meter was only accessible by the landlord so for a year and a half the bills were estimated, then they installed the smart meter and tried to retroactively charge us \$900. They didn't tell us those original bills were estimated. This rate hike is going towards cleaning facilities which should've been ongoing. Astoria and the Bronx had the highest asthma rates for kids in the whole country in part because of the con Ed plant. They should incrementally go towards green energy but haven't.

Chiara D'Amore-Klaiman

They could be doing a lot more as a utility to give us cleaner energy. They don't seem interested in green energy. Living next to the plant while I love our neighborhood it makes me nervous. I think con Ed cares more about their shareholders than they care about their customers. Everyone's trying to use the pandemic to increase prices and I don't think the con Ed rate increases we've seen are justified. I think con Ed could decide to not profit as much. Compare their executive pay to the income of their average customer. Working from home uses more power and we're not unique in that. Maybe con Ed doesn't need to increase profits when we don't have a choice about it especially since they're a public utility. Right now is maybe not the time for them to make such high profits.

Kelly Perry

My bill was 3x higher than normal 2 months ago and we're very conservative with our heat and electricity plus we got a retroactive bill from 2020. We've been in the phone with con Ed for hours at a time before to try to fight charges.

Mohammad Sabur

Recently my bill has been 30% more. The \$60 more per month proposal is unaffordable for me and my family.

Richard Meyer

Inflation is already very high so of course I don't wanna pay more for electricity with summer coming up and everyone needing to run the AC. My bills have steadily been going up with con Ed as is.

Sokyong Yun

We obviously don't want rates to go up. We saw a spike around January and February. Would rather us go towards green energy.

Janet Arcila

All costs are out of control right now. People are suffering and con Ed is a monopoly that lets them do whatever they want. I've seen my bills go up recently and everyone is complaining about the same thing. I don't know who can survive between gas prices and inflation, we're in a very difficult moment of our lives because everything is monopolized and there is no other reason for it. Every single aspect of life is monopolized. Years ago you could choose from 10 companies now it's just down to one or two, not only for electricity and gas but every other aspect of life.

Kendrick Woods

Summer is getting really hot and we need to run the ac. Rates have already gone up for us in the past year and we have a retroactive bill from 2020. This proposal would really suck if it went into effect.

Leo Saito

I don't want rates to go up for the fact that we're still going through the pandemic and it's unfortunate that people don't realize how much money we've lost the last few years and con ed isn't giving thought to how much more they're asking people to pay right now.

Polak

Con Ed has already been ripping people off. With the smart meter I didn't get any notification they were coming to install it and then they charged me \$200 per month for not having the meter installed and then I couldn't get through to them about making an appointment. They shouldn't pin this on me. And then they save money from the smart meter and probably lay people off. They don't look out for the public, only for their shareholders.

Chong Bretillon

I already saw my rates go up in January. I'd be very mad if I had to pay an extra \$60 per month there is no point in paying these people for no reason they're crooks.

Amy Harlib

If we as consumers are expected to pay the burden of rate increases, we should be a part of deciding the future of these cases. My neighbors and I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd. ConEd profits from lack of civic participation in cases like this one and PSC is allowing them to do so by not demanding further public participation in this process. Simply put, requesting a rate increase during A TIME OF EXTREME HARDSHIP FOR ORDINARY FOLKS makes clear how out of touch ConEd is with its consumers. We need a rate reduction, not an increase.

Deny ConEd's egregious rate hike request for electricity and gas and develop a rate plan that ENABLES TRANSITIONS TO CLEAN EFFICIENT ENERGY FROM HEMP OIL AND USED COOKING OIL while reducing current rates.

Carolyn Ratcliffe

ConEd bills are already high. In the summer when elderly people require air conditioning in order to survive, the rates are exorbitant. For those on a fixed income it is a hard choice to make. Considering the fact that ConEdison is requiring massive amounts of trees to be cut in East River Park this will increase the heat island effect on residents of the Lower East Side which has one of the highest asthma rates in NYC. ConEd needs to learn how to be a good neighbor, not a corporate mogul. We appreciate the fact that they provide power & gas but they need lessons in corporate responsibility in how to provide affordable services w/o endangering the lives of their customers.

Linda Weiss

Where do I start? The unfairness of raising rates while we are still in a pandemic and some people have still not found work. Older people on fixed incomes who can hardly afford food!

The climate crisis that you don't seem to be doing anything to help. I could go on and on but you have heard all this. You know all the reasons why you would be adding to people's suffering. How about listening this time!

Diana Basso, Esq.

Coned rate increases since 2019 are egregious and too high. In early 2019 Coned changed my meter to a smart meter and shortly thereafter my Coned gas/elec bill for a 495 sq ft 1br climbed over \$50/60 percent or from \$80 to \$132/mo. on level billing plan with no change in my use. I asked coned to check calibration on the new meter (I continue to pay 80/mo) and it took them about a year. The coned tech claimed the new meter was measuring my use properly. I asked Coned to send a more exact calibration device (said no) or replace with the old meter and learned there is an install charge plus extra \$50/mo to send someone to read the old style meter in person.) \$132/mo is already outrageous; please do not increase coned's rates further.

Allan Horst

I had a mysterious \$500 increase in December that they haven't explained. They said I needed to pay a \$750 deposit or they would cut my power and then told me to go on a payment plan for it. It would be difficult to pay the extra \$60. I would also prefer if we moved towards greener energy than ConEd and I'm a supporter of the build public renewables act.

Evan Allgood

In the summer, our monthly electric bill from ConEd already reaches as high as \$190. (There are only two of us in a one-bedroom apartment.) This is especially hard to stomach because in 2020, ConEd tried to charge us an extra \$300 for three months of electricity that we hadn't used. We'd moved into the apartment in July, which they knew, and they were reading a meter that hadn't been read since March. I had to fight tooth and nail, and file a complaint with the NY Dept. of Consumer Affairs, to finally make that fraudulent bill go away.

Needless to say, this isn't the most honest or trustworthy company.

The prospect of ConEd increasing their rates is terrifying, and (along with skyrocketing rents) likely to drive even more people to leave the city. If anything, rates should be reduced.

Stephanie Jones

ConEd bills are unaffordable as it is - I can't fathom that with the outrageous expense to Astorians this winter, they find themselves needing MORE money. My heat is electric, and in one of the coldest winters in my memory (and I grew up in Connecticut, I'm rather used to cold winters), ConEd doubled our bill. Would they have preferred we freeze?

Whatever reason ConEd claims they have more cost, Astorians should not have to bear the burden of paying it, especially when we suffer the consequences of their air polluting projects as they try to turn a higher profit. Furthermore, I didn't learn of these proposals through ConEd or PSC. I'm fortunate to have an assembly member who keeps me informed. The lack of transparency on this does not inspire confidence that it won't be directly harmful to myself and my neighbors.

PSC must not allow ConEd to take advantage of New Yorkers with increased rates.

Nick Curto

ConEd claims the rate hike they just proposed will help New York meet our climate goals and keep costs as low as possible – but that's not true. ConEd is still proposing to spend almost \$1 billion a year on investments that will prolong the use of dirty fracked gas and make massive profits off the few clean energy projects they are proposing. New York State: Deny ConEd's egregious rate hike request for electricity and gas and develop a rate plan that actually meets our climate goals while reducing current rates. If we as consumers are expected to pay the burden of rate increases, we should be a part of deciding the future of these cases. My neighbors and I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd. ConEd profits from lack of civic participation in cases like this one and PSC is allowing them to do so by not demanding further public participation in this process. Simply put, requesting a rate

increase during a pandemic makes clear how out of touch ConEd is with its consumers. We need a rate reduction, not an increase.

Valerii Makarouchko

I'm strongly opposed to ConEd rate increase. ConEd bills are already too high. At the start of the pandemic, I lost much of my income due to significantly cut work hours, and now, two years later still making a little over a half of what I did before the pandemic. Summer is coming and electricity part of the bill will be even higher, and we'll have to choose whether to use air-conditioning, or buy food. It's unacceptable. The pandemic is not over. Requesting a rate increase at these times makes it clear how ConEd is out of touch with their consumers. We need rate reduction, not rate increase.

Eloy Bleifuss Prados

New Yorkers are already struggling with cost of living increases. It's only getting worse. Higher ConEd bills would put extra pressure on young people such as myself. I am 27, I work in the arts, and any type of increase will be a new extra cost placed on my shoulders and those of my neighbors. PSC must put people before corporations. Oppose any rate increase.

Adrienne Carroll

If we as consumers are expected to pay the burden of rate increases, we should be a part of deciding the future of these cases. My neighbors and I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd. ConEd profits from lack of civic participation in cases like this one and PSC is allowing them to do so by not demanding further public participation in this process. Simply put, requesting a rate increase during a pandemic makes clear how out of touch ConEd is with its consumers. We need a rate reduction, not an increase.

Judith Stadler

ConEd bills are already too high. As a 77 year old woman on a fixed income, the effects of any increase, regardless of how small or big, will have detrimental effects on my health and well-being. Too many times throughout the course of this pandemic, I have had to choose between paying my ConEd bill, purchasing more PPE, or even being able to afford a hot soup. PSC cannot allow ConEd to continue lining their pockets. We are still living through a pandemic and suffering the physical, mental, and financial burdens that come with it. PSC must do what is right and protect us against this predatory behavior.

If we as consumers are expected to pay the burden of rate increases, we should be a part of deciding the future of these cases. My neighbors and I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd. ConEd profits from lack of civic participation in cases like this one and PSC is allowing them to do so by not demanding further public participation in this process. Simply put, requesting a rate increase during a pandemic makes clear how out of touch ConEd is with its consumers. We need a rate reduction, not an increase.

William Treadway

Average consumers are the backbone of any society and business. However, ConEd keeps slapping us in the face by trying to get richer off the backs of people who are struggling to make ends meet. ConEd's request for yet another obscene rate hike in the same fiscal year they already received one is a slap in the face to consumers like us. My family lives in such fear of getting an obscenely overpriced bill we cannot afford to pay that we no longer put on overhead lights or lamps after sunset, relying instead on battery operated candles and a night light.

We shouldn't have to live in fear of the monthly bill. We also shouldn't be forced to bear the financial burden of ConEd's alleged clean energy initiatives that are the supposed reason for these obscene rate hikes. That should be the responsibility of the federal and state governments to provide that money. And something needs to be done about ConEd's delivery charges. Why should there be separate \$30+ charges for delivering gas and electric? And why do those charges keep fluctuating when it should be ONE single charge that remains steady, just like the cable and phone providers.

Wendy Brawer

This proposal does too little to address climate issues, especially for residents in Astoria dealing directly with dirty energy plants. In ConEd's 2020 rate hike case, state regulators failed to do their job to protect us and allowed the company to spend a lot of money on new fossil fuel infrastructure that did not comply with New York's crucial Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and instead made huge profits by extending the life of its gas systems. We demand that DPS do a better job in this rate case of upholding the CLCPA and protecting us from stranded assets.

Sarah Ferguson

I cannot afford this increase. Our ConEd bills are already too high. Since our building does not have a central boiler, I have my own electric hot water heater and pay for my own gas heat. My bills have doubled in recent months. This proposed rate increase is just too much.

Rob Hollander

Why hasn't Con Edison informed us of their intent to raise its rates and its full justification? As a 67-year-old life-long resident of NYC, I deserve a full accounting and full transparency, as does every resident in the City.

Ilia Goro

It's expensive enough. Electricity was way more than it should be when we moved in. The electrician came and confirmed that nothing was wrong it just costs a lot. Paying another \$60 a month would suck.

Lizzie Oh

We have to pay the utilities for the whole building. Not only is the rate hike ridiculous but con Ed is incompetent. Utilities are a basic necessity to live and survive and \$10 extra would mean less groceries and what not.

Jackie Jediny

To whom it may concern, Please stop the Con Edison price increase. I'm a single person who works as a teacher and I don't make much as it is. With the pandemic and price increases, we do not need more increases in our bills especially electric and gas. Thanks!

Jen Gurek

Pre COVID it was \$79 per month and now it's doubled with the input of the smart meter which was supposed to lower costs. I went to a community meeting and Con Ed said the smart meter would lower the costs. Our land lady increased rent to accommodate for price increases. It's already affected us in a huge way with everything else already going up. I feel like the benefit has not been on the side on the consumer and now the corporation is price gouging us. My husbands raise has already been taken up by increased costs and we're basically a one income household.

Constituent Testimonies - Submitted Anonymously

As each month of the pandemic has gone by, I've seen friends and neighbors struggle with such a wider range of horrible, unexpected challenges and uphill battles. And now, the problems are going to be compounded as we watch our ConEd bills skyrocket. Not only are these rate hikes bad for our community, we are already seeing the ways it is going to roll back the NECESSARY progress NYC needs to make on climate action. The LNG plant contributes to local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. ConEd should retire the facility and not invest our money into it. PSC: we need to you to step in and help our community be one that can thrive for us and for the generations to come!

We Are a family of four-two toddlers. It's been very difficult paying our con Ed bill.. Were still trying to pay it off. It comes down to not turn on the heat in order to save money or risk our toddlers getting sick from it being so cold. It's never been this high and out children are suffering because of it. It is not affordable at all.. We can't continue to pay such high prices!

We are a family of 4 - 2 young kids in the school system here. The recent hikes have impacted us drastically. Worse, there is no warning and no way to plan. There is no guidance to help lower bills and with the summer coming and one of us working from home, we can't not have an ac on. We have to stay in our neighborhood for our kids, their community but we even with our landlord being kind and not raising rent due to these hikes we are being hit.

None of this is acceptable and it is being forced on all of us without warning. In the winter we kept heaters off and bundled but in the summer - Kids will over heat. Pets will overheat. The elderly on fixed incomes will have no choice and they will get sick. This is a very dangerous game being played.

ConEd needs to reconsider and support the communities they serve through this moment. They are NOT loosing money - they are capitalizing on a narrative of inflation at the cost of the well being of others. these aren't businesses being impacted. These are families.

As rent prices are increasing and wages remain stagnant, I, like many of my neighbors and friends, am really struggling to make ends meet. So to hear that ConEd wants to raise prices in the midst of this crisis is incredibly disheartening and, quite frankly, dehumanizing. We are not consumers, we are people. And to raise these prices right as the summer months are approaching and we need our ACs to stay cool feels particularly cruel. I hope that the Public Service Commission can use this opportunity to reduce our rates, not allow ConEd to increase them.

In the past year my wife and I have experienced the death of five family members. We have both contracted COVID, and have both experienced wage and work shortages due to ongoing budget issues related to COVID. We are barely keeping our heads above water. Now, our landlord is announcing a \$200 rent increase, citing his own increase in bills and taxes. He expects us to make up his shortfall from his own ConEd and tax hikes. This rate hike trickles down to the most vulnerable people with the least amount of power. The system makes sure of that. If you want NYC to remain a diverse, robust city and a destination for world-class artists and educators then you must make it a city in which they can survive. There is a limit to what the population can support.

ConEd bills are way too high! This rate increase will have a huge detrimental effect on my overall well-being. PSC cannot allow ConEd to continue lining their pockets. We are still living through a pandemic and suffering the physical, mental, and financial burdens that come with it. PSC must do what is right and protect us against this predatory behavior. In addition, I want to voice my anger and dismay about the fact that mature, 80-year-old trees are currently being cut down in the northern side of East River Park on behalf of Con Ed. The work in East River Park for the ESCR plan was supposed to be done in phases, with 42% of the park—most of the northern end—open to the public and not disrupted while the southern end is in its current decimated state. The trees in question were certainly NOT supposed to be removed this year, to make life in this community at least somewhat bearable at this time. However, 70 trees that were supposed to still be protected have already been clear-cut or are slated to be, so that the ConEd trucks can get through and Con Ed work can be done. In addition, ConEd is now responsible for impacting wildlife and natural habitats. I am aware that ConEd is alleging that your company is not responsible for the killing of the trees, yet I also know that the City affirms that the trees ARE, in fact, being removed on behalf of ConEd. Additionally, I'm aware that ConEd has made efforts to appear "green" and in support of preserving community green spaces. In truth, ConEd is playing a complicit role with the city in obliterating the protection that our natural environment afforded us— in terms of flooding, air quality, and the cooling of the air, which will now be subject to the heat-island effect. My life, my health and that of the entire community living in the LES are at risk, and your company is exacerbating this crisis. I encourage you to look at photos of what this "resiliency project" looks like, if you have not seen it. Currently the southern end looks like a desolate, treeless, 30-acre bomb site, susceptible to flooding and dangerous temperatures over the summer. Your company is making that a reality for the northern end, as well. One day it will be an international crime to destroy trees. Stop Ecocide is working with a group of lawyers, diplomats, and across all sectors of civil society, towards making ecocide an international crime.

I'm an Astoria resident and small business owner who, like many, had to adapt and make changes to my life and my business through the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. And with prices skyrocketing everywhere, raising gas and electric prices by the proposed magnitude would simply be another nail in the coffin for me, my family, my business and its employees. Please do not take this statement as me not wanting to do my part for the environment or various cleaner energy bill being presented. I feel we all need to chip in to make sure we work toward saving the planet. However, the percentage of that work needs to be leveraged based on income and political power. And by that metric, there is absolutely no reason ConEd should be able to pass that spending back onto its customers. Especially since their proposal does next to nothing to move the needle of climate issues, it didn't comply with New York's crucial Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, and instead just gathered money via elongating an outdated fossil fuel model. Also the proposed LNG cooling tower in Astoria would be the next step in poisoning the air of our community and would create countless new medical conditions for future generations of Astorians. In summation I ask you to deny ConEd's horrendous and damaging rate hike request for electricity and gas and develop a rate plan that actually meets our climate goals while reducing current electricity rates. Thank you very much for your time.

Con Edison bill are already high and they should not be getting any higher! My father is the only breadwinner of the family and he cannot afford any bill increases. Con-Ed also was never transparent with its clients about this which is not fair!

It's already difficult to buy food and other necessary goods, prices are raising every day, if conedison raise it's rate/ price then it will be hard for kids to study after sunset. Now time to think what kind of future NY want? A dark night with a dark future or a lighted night with bright future of NY?

I'm living paycheck to paycheck. Food and housing supply costs are increasing. There's no social safety net in this country. I owe over \$300k in debt. despite having a job, it's not paying enough to make ends meet. My savings are depleting.

On top of all of these challenges, I have to worry about paying an increase on upcoming ConEd bills? This is going to make things worse. it'll push me closer to bankruptcy.

I am an adjunct single mother homeowner barely making ends meet. I can barely afford basic utilities as it is. We need a rate decrease NOT increase!!

I wish I didn't have to pay for it. We have two AC units that we already have to keep paying for. With the prices increases and inflation this is ridiculous. I applied for food stamps and only getting \$9 per month from it because they say "my income is too high." ConEd should not increase rates.

After COVID we've seen all prices increase and income didn't go up so this will especially hurt middle class and working class people especially single moms.

We are Retired so we are living on fixed income. It would be hard for us in the long run to pay an 18.2% increase for our gas bill. This is ridiculous.

I have lived in the same apartment since 2009 and my ConEd electric bill started out at \$59 a month and today it is \$139.00 a month, double what I initially began paying, 13 years later. Due to the pandemic, I now work from home so I truly need to pay our ConEd bill each month. People are on fixed incomes and wages have not increased to reflect inflation. I strongly support DECREASING our electricity rates. My ConEd bill is extremely high as it is and there's no good reason for it to get even more expensive during a pandemic.

They've already increased rates. Our budget for utilities has doubled and no one is getting any raises right now so it would force us to move out of the city soon.

Considering heat and electricity are things we cannot live without, it's unfair and unethical for ConEd to pursue these rate hikes. Currently my partner and I pay over \$300 dollars a month in utilities minimum and it's much more in the winter and summer. In light of the fact that they are attempting to build more crude energy plants that we begged the state repeatedly to block, I don't believe these proposed rate hikes are anything but a money grab on a neighborhood that is already feeling the burden of their bills. We need to see more leadership standing up for us, not ConEd and seeking reduced rates instead of allowing continued increases.

There isn't any more room in my budget for extra con Ed. It just doesn't stretch that far. You weather a while pandemic and this is what is left for us on the other side. I know this hurts others as well.

Without the added and material benefit, a rate increase in these times are not welcome. A more robust rate plan that takes into consideration what the public can afford, would be better for Astoria.

As a customer of ConEd and resident of Astoria I am disappointed that ConEd would increase rates while we are still reeling from the pandemic - I am especially disappointed that there has been no notification to us as consumers, nor has our input been requested. My utility bills are already a burden each month, and the proposed rate increase is significant to myself and my neighbors. I implore ConEd and PSC to reconsider this rate increase - my neighbors and I need a rate reduction, if anything, as we enter the hot months of summer and rely more on electricity and air conditioning.

Con Ed rates are so high already, and as a young woman in her early 20s I want to participate in clean energy programs so that I can help make the world better for my children, but the cost of keeping the power on is proving to be way too much across the board. I hold my clean energy usage highly, but now that I am struggling to afford even the regular power and gas rates, it is looking like I will have to choose between light, heat, or protecting the planet for my children. Please help and reduce the rates, not increase them!

It's absurd that rates should go up by 11-20% when inflation is 7+% and we're all struggling to make ends meet after two years of work interruptions. I haven't gotten a raise in over two years, and I spent much of

2020-2021 scrambling to make ends meet with random jobs just to survive. Just within the last several months I've returned to something near pre-2020 work levels after much of that time being furloughed. I paid my bills in full and on time throughout the last two years, and this is how they thank me? I am unaware of any improvements or explanation as to why the rates would have to go up so much all of a sudden.

As a state employee, I've spent the past two years putting my life at risk on a daily basis to help ensure the said state continues to function. We have been 'rewarded' for our hard work by the administrators trying to fob us off with no pay increase. 0%. Nothing, at all. Their response to the union is they are "too busy" to negotiate. Let's repeat that: Eric Adams corrupt Rent Stabilization Board wants to raise rents 6%. ConEd wants to raise electricity 18%... and the worker. What does the worker get? NOTHING. It isn't like we were all living luxurious lives before the pandemic, but the way this is being used as an excuse to further rob people who work for a living, pay their taxes and form the functional core of society is terrible. Tax wealth, tax the rich who got \$74bln wealthier over the past two years at our expense. Don't put this on the backs of those who have had enough already.

The outrageous prices for electricity and gas and the continued increases are taking a major impact on the family. Often we are cold just to cut back. Any climate change enhancements needs to be done in time and in affordable manner and not impact our ability to be able to afford food and necessities.

Heating and electricity is no longer affordable. Maintaining a temperature in the home in winter at 66 degrees should not elicit a bill for 700 dollars. Another increase will not be helpful to sustain living in NYC.

Last increase had a bill one month that was more than double. It'll be hard on us, everything is going up. Groceries are high and they already increased utility rates. My kids don't have jobs and I only work part time.

With a 41k salary how am I supposed to keep with my bills and take care of my family. Why am I being asked for more when the service and quality is the same. We need a ConEd rate reduction, not an increase!

My ConEd bill is egregiously high. I live with one other person, and we do our best to conserve energy, yet my bill is never below \$150/month. I've switched bulbs, put my thermostat on a timer, turn off power strips and my modem when I leave the apartment, keep curtains closed to help with insulation, nothing helps. As New Yorkers, we already pay the highest energy costs in the nation to a company that made over \$13 billion in revenue in 2021, has \$63 billion in assets, \$20 billion in equity, and a CEO whose public salary is \$7 million. ConEd raises prices because it can, and solely for shareholder gains. ConEd does not need additional revenue as none of it currently goes towards modernizing or clean energy initiatives or even basic maintenance and upkeep (why did everyone's power in Astoria surge on April 26th?). PSC cannot allow this predatory behavior to continue.

Everyone is still recovering from the pandemic that is still not quiet over and. Not the right time nor is it ever. Absolutely no need to do it.

If I have to pay all of these rate increases, I should be able to have a say. My neighbors and I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd. The profits gained with lack of civic participation in cases like this one and PSC is allowing them to that so by not making people aware of their right to public participation in this process. Basically, requesting a rate increase during a global pandemic shows how out of touch ConEd is with its consumers. We need a rate reduction, not an increase.

It is becoming too expensive to live in New York. Rents are skyrocketing and now, behind our backs, ConEd is trying to raise rates. The last few months they already have raised rates. My usage is very consistent month to month but my bills have been anywhere from 30 to 60% higher than normal the last few months. I got one email with an acknowledgment from ConEd in January saying rates were abnormal but nothing since then. To now find out they are trying to increase even more is extremely frustrating. I already pay more than I can afford for my rent (as do most people in this city) and now I might be asked to pay even higher electricity bills? It's really becoming too expensive to live here and I hope this one thing can be stopped while we all deal with extremely high rental prices, high gas prices, high food prices, etc. I am an educator who has given so much to this city and loves this city dearly, so feeling like I'm trying to be priced out of living here is incredibly disheartening.

Due to the difficult global circumstances all New Yorkers are in: COVID-19, war in the Ukraine in Eastern Europe, falling stock and bond markets, higher food prices; I fully concur with most ConEd customers that we need utility relief.

ConEd bills are already too high. I simply can't afford it. We have to keep turning off appliances and lowering down the thermostat temperature. We were wearing winter jackets indoors. Can't imagine what this summer bill gonna be. PSC cannot allow ConEd to continue lining their pockets. We are still living through a pandemic and suffering the physical, mental, and financial burdens that come with it. PSC must do what is right and protect us against this predatory behavior.

The people of NYC has suffered enough with this terrible inflation and gas prices. I was not able to get a raise in pay since the pandemic started, despite risking my life as a front line worker. And now, I can barely afford groceries, gas and payments on my home. adding and increase in electric and gas will push people out of astoria. It is already too expensive to live here. We really need a break from somewhere. We cant keep taking all these cost of living increases

I am someone who has always monitored my household's energy use; the installations of SmartMeters have made this even easier to do. It astounds me that I now live with less roommates in a smaller, sunnier apartment (using far less energy than in years past), yet our energy bills in Astoria have been continuously increasing in a such a short period of time. The proposed rate increases would put an even bigger strain on our budgets. I could somewhat justify this if ConEd was finally investing in clean, renewable energy and being transparent with consumers about those costs, but that simply isn't the case. This is a critical time for action from the PSC - for the health and financial well-being of current and future Astorians. Deny

ConEd's rate hike request and develop a plan that actually meets our climate goals while reducing current rates.

Smart meters were installed on my property and subsequent to the installation, I started getting sick (headaches, pressure in my head and dizziness) when entering my basement. I asked Con Edison to opt out for all of the meters on my property and they said I could not opt out for my tenants -- even if the meters are on my property. I was charged \$100 no access fees and now I would have to pay \$9.50 per each account belonging to my tenants if I want them to opt out. That would be almost \$1,000 for 6 accounts per year that I would have to pay in order to keep the safe analog mechanical maintenance free meters that I've had for over 25 years. Also, Con Edison said that I cannot opt out of the meter account that provides hallway lighting because it is considered commercial. Also, with the traditional analog meters, there is no electricity needed to run them, but the digital meters you need electricity and therefore there is an additional cost to run the electricity on the meter 24/7 so it is not saving costs for the consumer. The Con Ed fees are so high to begin with, and with the proposed rate increase and additional fees for opting out/no access fees, it's too much. Given that Con Edison makes billion in profits, it's unconscionable that they are asking for additional increases and fees while I have to pay extra not to get sick. I would like the public service commission to approve the rate increases and also remove the costs associated with keeping the analog mechanical since it is causing a disability and physical injury. People shouldn't be forced to be subjected to accept a device that makes them sick -- especially where they live/work.

Sometimes I stare at the bill and wonder how it's possible it's that high. I used to have money but now have to dip into savings and my 401k. They gave me retroactive bill that was a big chunk more and myself and neighbors are just shocked.

With the current pandemic and work shortage that is prevalent in the New York City as well as the increased inflation seen across the country, raising the prices of essential needs is only hurting the community. With wages staying the same and everything else increasing in price this only serves to add undue stress to the community that Coned claims to serve.

In winter it's usually 350/400 but went up to 600 one month. They should have been more transparent about rates going up. We're doing what we can to mitigate it by going solar which is also better for the environment.

They were charging me \$100 a month for not having the smart meter installed which was not my fault because they had access. After the smart meter was installed it began giving me headaches because the electromagnetic frequency spikes were so high. They say you can't opt out from the plp since it's commercial so you're still getting that expense. My neighbors rates already went up 30% in the winter. We also actually have to pay more for the smart meter since it uses electricity to operate while the analog one didn't. A public utility should not be making billions in profit.

This winter, my ConEd bill was through the roof! I was paying nearly triple of what I've paid in past years. My gas bill was especially high. I am a single person living in a small one bedroom apartment and should not be paying \$250 for a monthly gas/electric bill. It's the the rent that will price many people out of the neighborhood, but the utilities. I've never seen anything like it, nor is it justified.

Working class, working poor and citizens living on assistance will not survive with these drastic and aggressive increases. Still struggling from rent issues and job loss from Covid will leave people making desperate choices between buying food or paying energy bills. Coned has proven that it can no longer be trusted and these increases are not necessary.

I lost my job at the beginning of the pandemic, and struggled to make ends meet. I am still recovering. My bills are already too high - ConEd is already too expensive! I don't know how I can pay higher bills. If ConEd actually cared about the environment, if they were using the money to address climate change, then at least it wouldn't be mere corporate greed. but it is greed, plain and simple - and ordinary people should not be used to line the pockets of rich people even more!!

Ever since pandemic, CoNEd has been rising its bill. We cannot afford to pay. As a single income earner, paying off other expenses, it's quite hard to manage additional fees and rise of conEd bill. I request CoNED to be considerate of fellow Americans situations as pandemic has drastically affected us financially.

I have lived in Astoria for 30 years, since I first came to this country. Every year, it becomes harder and harder to stay here because of increased rents, utility costs, and inflation. Enough is enough. ConEd can't be allowed to make money off of us while we're struggling through a pandemic. PSC, protect the public. Reduction, not increase.

I'm 75 years old living on a fixed income and any increase in my ConEd bills would be a serious financial hardship. Instead of raising coned rates please lower them so that seniors like me don't have to choose between keeping the lights on and keeping food in the refrigerator.

These days, times are very difficult financially. The thought I'm having to pay more for gas and electric is very troublesome. It is essential that Con Edison and New York government do everything possible to keep Gas and Electric costs affordable. Thank you!

I'm on social security. Food and everything else is already higher. They already make enough money.

As somebody in a single income household - I'm a recent graduate trying to make sure I can afford housing in NYC. With inflation and rent rising, increasing ConED rates is truly unacceptable, when they are ALREADY unaffordable. Please for the sake of your voters, deny ConEd's rate hike request for electricity and gas! Work with the working-class Astoria community to develop a rate plan that prioritizes climate goals while reducing current electricity rates. It's insane that we as consumers are expected to shoulder the burden of rate increases, when we are a captive audience with no other option but ConED. It's a monopoly that needs to be stopped. Why aren't our public officials protecting us? If we as consumers

are expected to pay the burden of rate increases, we should be a part of deciding the future of these cases. I did not get information about this case through PSC or through ConEd - that should be illegal. ConEd profits from lack of civic participation in cases like this one and PSC is allowing them to do so by not demanding further public participation in this process. Simply put, requesting a rate increase during a pandemic, housing shortage, and climate crisis makes clear how out of touch ConEd is with its consumers. We need a rate reduction, not an increase.

It is unacceptable that ConEd wants to raise rates during the pandemic. As a young person in NYC, I always have to choose between paying my bills, like ConEd, or going out. Even so, this is a position of privilege as many others are choosing between paying their bills and putting food on the table. This is outrageous, PSC we need a rate reduction, not an increase.

We've lived here in Astoria for almost two decades, and never seen as many price increases as we have seen in the last 2 years. We understand that some price increases will occur from time to time, because of market changes, but the increase in the last two years has nearly eaten up all our family's excess income. In addition to the cost of food, rent increases, and transportation, this essentially has erased any personal gains we have made over the last few years from all our hard work. Finally, the price always goes up, because of the 'market', but it never goes down.

Con Edison customers should not be gouged by higher costs of power that have not benefited anyone except Con Edison owners. No increase should be allowed unless it is related to shifting ALL Con Edison power sources to those that roll back climate damages caused by dirty sources instead of using wind, sun, and natural movements of water, like the ocean tides or movement of river water. Con Edison did not provide sufficient notice to the public when they set up their plan for these increases.unnecessary smart meters. As a utility, Con Edison must be required to act in a public, transparent manner. Con Edison's current proposal does too little to address climate issues. Their pollution hurts people beyond those most affected, in Astoria. The entire region is polluted, and our whole world is affected, by dirty energy plants. New York State regulators failed to do their job to protect against Con Edison's 2020 rate increase. There needs to be accountability by ""regulators"" who failed to do their job, and allowed Con Edison to spend a lot of money on new fossil fuel infrastructure that did not comply with New York's crucial Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and instead made huge profits by extending the life of its gas systems. We demand that DPS do their job in this rate case of upholding the CLCPA and protecting us from stranded assets. ConEd has requested to spend \$70.4 million to extend the life of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) cooling tower system facility in Astoria . That should be denied. The LNG plant contributes to local, regional, and world-wide air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. ConEd should retire the facility and not invest our money into it.

Once ConEd increases their prices, they stay high, without any appreciable changes in service, or without reflecting any external realities. Oil and gas crashed in price during the pandemic, but the prices remained high. This suggests that there's no real connection between the market and the prices ConEd charges. Considering that we can't choose who provides us electricity and gas, we are simply being forced to absorb whatever ConEd thinks it can squeeze out of us. This is monopolistic and needs to stop.

I'm against rate hikes that will hurt New Yorkers still reeling from the pandemic, when it seems Con Edison is merely seeking to increase its profits rather than invest in alternatives to fossil fuels. They are not leading the way on addressing the climate emergency. One example of Con Ed not acting in good faith, and a reason we shouldn't take them at their word on anything is that contractors are cutting trees to make room for their vehicles in East River Park, while denying responsibility. It doesn't matter that the workers themselves are not employed by Con Ed; it's who will benefit from the cutting.

Another example of bad-faith communication is the lack of notice given for this proposed hike. This is not the time to reward this private utility.

Stop the rates increase. Our salaries are not increasing as much as all the rates around us. It is getting harder for working family to pay all their bills