

1. PUBLIC NOTICE SUPERSTORM SANDY

Documents:

[8-17-20 SUPERSTORM SANDY RESCHEDULED PUBLIC NOTICE.PDF](#)

2. SUPERSTORM SANDY REVIEW COMMITTEE, 08-17-20

Documents:

[SUPERSTORM SANDY REVIEW COMMITTEE, 08-17-20.PDF](#)



## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT**

**THE HEARING OF THE  
SUPERSTORM SANDY REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE  
NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
REGARDING TROPICAL STORM ISAIAS  
HAS BEEN RESCHEDULED TO  
MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2020 AT 10:00 AM**

**IN**

**THE PETER J. SCHMITT MEMORIAL LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER  
THEODORE ROOSEVELT EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BUILDING  
1550 FRANKLIN AVENUE, MINEOLA, NEW YORK 11501**

*Please be advised that public attendance is permitted at this meeting, but due to health and safety concerns associated with the COVID-19 virus and New York State requirements restricting public gatherings, the maximum capacity of the Peter J. Schmitt Legislative Chamber is limited to fifty people, inclusive of elected officials, staff, and attendees. Passes will be distributed on a first come first served basis beginning one half hour prior to meeting and attendees will be given an opportunity to sign in to address the Legislature for a maximum of three minutes. Attendees will be subject to temperature checks prior to entering the chamber, and must adhere to social distancing guidelines and wear a mask while they are in the chamber.*

*This meeting will also be available for viewing online at <http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Legis/index.html> As in-person attendance is limited, public comment on any item may be emailed to the Clerk of the Legislature at [LegPublicComment@nassaucountyny.gov](mailto:LegPublicComment@nassaucountyny.gov) and will be made part of the formal record for this Legislative meeting.*

*While this meeting is open to the public at a reduced capacity, the Nassau County Legislature is committed to making its public meeting accessible to individuals with disabilities. If, due to a disability, you need an accommodation or assistance to participate in the public meeting or to obtain a copy of the transcript of the public hearing in an alternative format in accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature at 571-4252, or the Nassau County Office for the Physically Challenged at 227-7101 or TDD telephone no. 227-8989.*

**DATED: August 7, 2020  
Mineola, NY**

**MICHAEL C. PULITZER  
Clerk of the Legislature  
Nassau County, New York**

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NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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RICHARD NICOLELLO

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PRESIDING OFFICER

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SUPERSTORM SANDY REVIEW COMMITTEE

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LEGISLATOR DENISE FORD

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CHAIR

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Theodore Roosevelt Building

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1550 Franklin Avenue

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Mineola, New York

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August 17, 2020

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10:21 P.M.

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2     A P P E A R A N C E S:

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4     LEGISLATOR DENISE FORD

5                     Chair

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7     LEGISLATOR STEVEN RHOADS

8                     Vice Chair

9

10    LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL

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12    LEGISLATOR JAMES KENNEDY

13

14    LEGISLATOR DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON

15                     Ranking member

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17    LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE

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19    LEGISLATOR JOSHUA LAFAZAN

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2 LEGISLATOR FORD: I would like to  
3 call this committee to order. Good morning  
4 everybody, and I will ask Legislator Kennedy  
5 to lead us in the pledge of Allegiance.

6 I will ask the clerk to call the  
7 roll.

8 MR. PULITZER: Thank you madam.  
9 Legislator Debra Mule.

10 LEGISLATOR MULE: Here.

11 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Joshua  
12 Lafazan.

13 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Here.

14 MR. PULITZER: Ranking member  
15 Delia DeRiggi-Whitton.

16 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:  
17 Here.

18 MR. PULITZER: Legislator James  
19 Kennedy.

20 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Here.

21 MR. PULITZER: Deputy Presiding  
22 Officer Howard Kopel.

23 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Here.

24 MR. PULITZER: Vice Chairman  
25 Steven Rhoads.

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2 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Present.

3 MR. PULITZER: Chairwoman Denise  
4 Ford.

5 LEGISLATOR FORD: Here.

6 MR. PULITZER: We have a quorum  
7 ma'am.

8 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very  
9 much and welcome all of you to this hearing.  
10 So, I'm not going to give an opening remark  
11 because I think it's more important to listen  
12 to PSE&G and the other testimonies from our  
13 OEM, Nassau County PD and our DPW.

14 So gentlemen, I really appreciate  
15 you coming here. Mr. Daniel Eichhorn and  
16 Mr. Jeff Greenblatt. I had the wrong name and  
17 I'm sorry.

18 Before we start, I would just like  
19 to say publicly that I do want to extend my  
20 gratitude to the workers that answered, that  
21 went out into the field to help restore power  
22 for the many hundreds of thousands of people  
23 that were without power. I know that at times  
24 it can be very dangerous and very time  
25 consuming, very strenuous type of job. The

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2 fact that they worked 18 hours a day or 16  
3 hours a day to be able to bring people back to  
4 service, I know it was a long time for many  
5 people to be without service, but I, as  
6 somebody who had been a technician, I really  
7 do want to recognize the work they did on  
8 behalf of so many people here in the Nassau  
9 County.

10 So, we know that, as I said, so  
11 many people without service. It's something  
12 that the storm came through. So we're going  
13 to ask you to please let us know how you  
14 prepared for the storm, what you did during  
15 the storm and then of course after the storm.  
16 What happened to let us know what you put into  
17 place and hopefully where you felt that things  
18 could have been better. Then we will follow  
19 up with questions. Thank you.

20 MR. EICHHORN: Good morning  
21 Chairperson Ford and distinguished members of  
22 the committee. My name is Dan Eichhorn. I'm  
23 the president and chief operating officer for  
24 PSE&G Long Island.

25 Thank you for inviting me to speak

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2 before your committee on behalf of PSE&G Long  
3 Island regarding our preparation and response  
4 to tropical storm Isaias. I have five areas  
5 that I will cover while we are here. The prep  
6 that we performed, our restoration efforts,  
7 some issues we encountered and then our next  
8 steps. With me today is also our CIO, Zeeshan  
9 Sheikh. Zeeshan is sitting back in the  
10 audience.

11 So, really to start off we  
12 recognize why we're here. When we experience  
13 weather events and storm knocks out power it's  
14 our responsibility to restore electricity in a  
15 timely and safe manner. We know why we're  
16 here. Unfortunately, the Isaias restoration  
17 process did not meet our customers  
18 expectations. It didn't meet your  
19 expectations nor ours. It also put our hard  
20 working, dedicated employees in a difficult  
21 position. Thankfully, we are not alone and  
22 PSE&G Long Island appreciates the support we  
23 received during the Isaias recovery from  
24 government officials, including state, county  
25 and municipal officials we work with preparing

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2 and responding to major storm events.

3 Our mission includes providing our  
4 customers with excellent customer service. So  
5 the accuracy and timeliness of restoration  
6 information our customer received during this  
7 storm was not acceptable and it will be  
8 improved. The issues our customers  
9 experienced in contacting us during this storm  
10 were also not acceptable and that also will be  
11 addressed.

12 Superior work and dedication to  
13 addressing the needs of our customers  
14 especially when severe weather strikes has  
15 been a hallmark of PSE&G Long Island. We are  
16 not satisfied with our customers experiences  
17 in the aftermath of Isaias, and we are  
18 conducting our own comprehensive after-action  
19 review to evaluate our preparedness and  
20 restoration performance. Rest assured, we  
21 have many of the same questions that this  
22 committee has concerning the issues we and our  
23 customers encountered during this storm. We  
24 fully appreciate and respect your roles and  
25 responsibilities. You are entitled to answers

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2 to your questions.

3 What I would hope is that you can  
4 appreciate that our singular focus has been  
5 restoring service to our customers. Now that  
6 that has been accomplished, we have turned our  
7 attention to getting answers to your  
8 questions. Answers that PSE&G Long Island,  
9 LIPA and you can have confidence that these  
10 issues have been properly identified and  
11 addressed. It is in everyone's best interest  
12 that we be given the opportunity to accomplish  
13 this now in a focused, methodical and  
14 comprehensive manner and once we have the  
15 answers we will provide them to you.

16 We will learn from this experience  
17 and we will remain committed to being  
18 recognized as providing best in class electric  
19 reliability and storm response for your  
20 constituents, our customers and for LIPA. A  
21 little bit about our preparation.

22 Tropical storm Isaias was an  
23 incredibly fast moving storm that moved across  
24 our region in less than a day leaving a path  
25 of danger we haven't seen since Superstorm

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2 Sandy. The wind driven nature of tropical  
3 storm Isaias presented an unusual challenge.  
4 This storm was unique with multiple layers of  
5 nested outages. Nevertheless, our planning  
6 and preparation was effective. Based on the  
7 anticipated damage we secured mutual  
8 assistance crews through the North Atlantic  
9 Mutual Assistance Group. We refer to that as  
10 NAMAG. PSE&G Long Island accepted any and all  
11 resources made available throughout the North  
12 Atlantic, the Great Lakes area and the Midwest  
13 mutual aid groups.

14 In fact, PSE&G Long Island was the  
15 first utility participating in NAMAG to  
16 request crews and secured nearly 1600 line  
17 workers based on requests for over 2,400 from  
18 NAMAG and other sources in an environment  
19 where utilities in New York and other states  
20 were also competing for these resources.

21 These 1600 line workers, which is  
22 more than three times we usually have to  
23 respond, that's our crews and contractors that  
24 are on the island, were ready for restoration  
25 the day the storm hit. So we were prepared

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2 for a major event. We expected this to be a  
3 major event. We continued to secure  
4 additional resources during the storm period  
5 based upon our projections. We ultimately  
6 secured in excess of 4,000 line workers during  
7 the storm's peak.

8 A robust communication engagement  
9 plan was prepared and executed. Advisory  
10 emails and updates were issued for the  
11 duration of the storm and provided to local  
12 media, news and news outlets. Our liaison  
13 organization was activated to communicate and  
14 coordinated with municipal leaders. Local  
15 emergency operation centers were provided with  
16 dedicated liaisons as requested. Our  
17 municipal liaisons worked closely with elected  
18 officials and municipal calls were conducted  
19 to proactively inform elected leaders of storm  
20 preparations and response efforts and to  
21 respond to elected officials questions.

22 PSE&G Long Island's Make Safe to  
23 Clear protocol was also activated and  
24 coordinated closely with local towns and  
25 villages on roadway debris removal issues.

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2 Proactive outreach was initiated to  
3 life support equipment customers enrolled in  
4 our critical care program. Communications  
5 with these customers continued throughout the  
6 storm with efforts aligned between the company  
7 and local emergency operation centers to  
8 perform required well visits for those life  
9 support equipment customers with continuing  
10 electrical outages.

11 Going to turn my comments now to  
12 our restoration.

13 While the hardening measures to the  
14 transmission and distribution system we  
15 implemented post-Sandy mitigated the potential  
16 severity of the impacts of this storm on  
17 electric to our customers, tropical storm  
18 Isaias impacted the backbone of our electric  
19 system. Despite the issues we encountered,  
20 our initial restoration efforts were not  
21 impacted. The storm caused damage to  
22 interconnection lines that bring power on to  
23 the island, our transmission system and  
24 substations as well as significant damage in  
25 the neighborhoods.

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2 Our first priority in the storm is  
3 to stabilize our infrastructure and ensure the  
4 backbone of the system is restored. We relied  
5 on a combination of our outage management  
6 system, a system we called SCATA, that alerts  
7 us to transmission and distribution systems  
8 that trip out and our smart meters to verify  
9 outages and direct our response. We responded  
10 effectively to restoring interconnection  
11 lines, major transmission lines, substations  
12 and the major circuits running throughout the  
13 island in the first 48 hours.

14 I'm just going to speak about some  
15 of the issues that many of our customers  
16 experienced.

17 Our storm restoration performance  
18 was negatively impacted by the poor customer  
19 communications and inaccurate estimated  
20 restoration times. Our communications as the  
21 storm landed our call center became overloaded  
22 and failed. As did text messaging  
23 functionality, our website and our customers  
24 facing outage map. Actions taken to address  
25 these issues were largely effective in

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2 bringing these systems back online in the  
3 first 24 hours. However, intermittent  
4 failures of all these digital communications  
5 channels continued throughout the entire storm  
6 restoration period impacting in the accuracy  
7 of our estimated restoration times.

8 We are investigating the facts but  
9 we clearly know that one of the key  
10 contributors was the failure of our outage  
11 management system to perform as designed at  
12 the beginning of the storm and the instability  
13 of this system throughout the entire storm  
14 period.

15 Among the consequences, each day  
16 manual processes were necessary to be executed  
17 in order to filter through new outage  
18 management system generated work that was not  
19 included in the previous day's storm plan.  
20 Additionally, some of this new work that  
21 appeared each day was duplicative of existing  
22 work and a significant effort was required  
23 each morning to separate and rationalize the  
24 legitimate new work from the duplicate work.  
25 Followed by modifications to the storm work

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2 plan which ultimately resulted in customers  
3 seeing us miss our estimated restoration  
4 times. These changes to the storm work plan  
5 resulted in frequent changes to certain  
6 customer restoration times.

7 Restoration times were also  
8 impacted by inaccurate estimates for the time  
9 it would take for crews to restore power.  
10 Particularly within the local neighborhoods.  
11 Prior to extending restoration times to  
12 reflect this pace of work efforts to increase  
13 output through additional resources and other  
14 measures were implemented. While these  
15 actions resulted in improvement, given the  
16 extent of the damage and the pace of the work  
17 they were not enough to avoid individual  
18 customer ETRs from being exceeded.

19 Essentially, in short, the amount  
20 of new work that we saw coming in the days  
21 after storm Isaias was material. In most  
22 storms we expect it. When a storm of that  
23 magnitude goes through the island it creates a  
24 lot of damage. Could be leaning poles,  
25 leaning trees, hanging branches. We expect a

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2 certain amount of work in the days following a  
3 major storm. In this storm the work that we  
4 saw was much more material. Could not be fit  
5 into our work plan and had an impact on our  
6 estimated restoration times.

7 As far as next steps, we realize  
8 that extreme weather, as evidenced by topical  
9 storm Isaias, is becoming more prevalent and  
10 more unpredictable. We also fully appreciate  
11 that customers expect better communication and  
12 an overall better response. We are committed  
13 to meeting these expectations and providing  
14 best in class service. We are working  
15 diligently to prepare for the next major  
16 weather event and ensure that PSE&G Long  
17 Island's response to this storm was an  
18 anomaly.

19 As I mentioned, we are conducting a  
20 thorough after-action review to determine what  
21 went wrong and why. As I said at the outset,  
22 I know you have questions and once we have  
23 answers we will be sure to provide them to  
24 you.

25 We also recognize that we're not

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2 alone. The findings, observations and  
3 recommendations from various stakeholders  
4 across New York State provide an opportunity  
5 for implementing improvements for the benefit  
6 our customers. Our senior leadership team and  
7 all of our dedicated employees are committed  
8 to cooperating and collaborating with this  
9 committee of Nassau County as well as the  
10 Public Service Commission, the Department of  
11 Public Service, LIPA and other stakeholders to  
12 develop recommendations that once implemented  
13 will improve and enhance our storm response  
14 and restoration process.

15 As frustrating as this storm was  
16 for everyone, I can tell that you our  
17 employees put their heart and soul into this  
18 response.

19 I would like to thank all employees  
20 who persevered throughout this storm and  
21 maintained focus on restoring service  
22 notwithstanding the issues we experienced. We  
23 are a company dedicated to providing  
24 exceptional customer service and this  
25 experience is not in keeping with our

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2 expectations. We will learn from our  
3 mistakes, correct them and do better. I would  
4 like to thank you very much for your time.

5 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very  
6 much. I know we all have questions so we will  
7 bounce around and everything. But for me,  
8 moving up to the -- as we are getting prepared  
9 for the storm season, like, during the spring  
10 or winter or whatever, do your crews go out to  
11 inspect where the power lines are, to like  
12 take a look at like trees that you would maybe  
13 judge that may have a possible impact on the  
14 line should a storm occur? Do you do that on  
15 a regular basis? A daily basis?

16 MR. EICHHORN: Yes, we do. We  
17 have the tree trim program where we tree trim  
18 the island over a four-year period. We do 25  
19 percent of the Island each year. Our  
20 transmission lines we do them on an annual  
21 basis. We do helicopter flyovers. We have  
22 drone flyovers and we make sure that our  
23 transmission right of ways are clear. We also  
24 have inspection programs where we perform  
25 inspections in substations. We do pole

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2 inspections and pole replacements based on the  
3 need.

4 LEGISLATOR FORD: I know that  
5 aside from the trees that fell down there was  
6 talk that some of the poles also may have  
7 fallen as well. Especially those that were  
8 like what we call double pole situations that  
9 may have not been properly -- maybe they were  
10 broken or something like that. Was that  
11 something that was true or you didn't have  
12 that happened at all?

13 MR. EICHHORN: I'm not aware of  
14 poles themselves just falling over. I am  
15 aware of trees that came down on lines and  
16 brought poles down. There were a number of  
17 poles that we had to replace during the  
18 restoration efforts.

19 LEGISLATOR FORD: I don't want to  
20 jump all over the place. Let me go to one of  
21 the questions from -- while I get my thoughts  
22 together on this. I guess when we look at  
23 what happened before this storm, you said that  
24 you do diligence in regard to looking at the  
25 trees that would have the greatest impact on

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2   the power lines. With a storm like Isaias,  
3   that as we saw how many trees that came down,  
4   how many lines that came down and over 420,000  
5   people were without power. A lot of them  
6   basically for a week. I guess right after,  
7   when you mobilized the crews, how many people  
8   did you say that you had currently on standby  
9   so that once the storm passed you were able to  
10   mobilize these crews? How many did you say  
11   that you had?

12           MR. EICHHORN:     We had all of our  
13   internal employees and contractors were in  
14   full storm mode. We requested prior to the  
15   storm 2500 off-island resources. We had  
16   commitments for about 1600 and roughly about  
17   1300 were on the island on Tuesday ready to  
18   start restoration once the storm passed.

19           LEGISLATOR FORD:   Then how many  
20   did you have employees and contractors did you  
21   say? I missed that.

22           MR. EICHHORN:     Our line  
23   department that would do most of the  
24   restoration is roughly 200 employees and we  
25   have 300 contract employees that work on the

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2 island continuously to help support our normal  
3 operations. So, 500 internal employees and  
4 then we were looking for 2500 external  
5 employees that would do the same restoration  
6 work.

7 LEGISLATOR FORD: You actually  
8 had about 1800 line workers, correct?

9 MR. EICHHORN: That was at the  
10 beginning of the storm. We continued to  
11 request and accept additional line workers.  
12 Ultimately, between our internal employees,  
13 tree trim employees that we brought on from  
14 off the island, as well additional high  
15 voltage line workers, it was over 6,500 people  
16 working on restoration efforts.

17 LEGISLATOR FORD: Then I guess  
18 aside from that I guess one of the biggest  
19 issues we have found was the communications.  
20 That residents were calling in, as you had  
21 said, that your call center had a failure. So  
22 that I guess either people were not getting  
23 their calls answered or they were getting busy  
24 and the calls dropped. Before something like  
25 this, do you test your communications to see

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2 when you have the most egregious situation?

3 Do you take a look to see how many calls like

4 your call center would be able to handle

5 during an emergency or do you just wait to see

6 when the emergency occurs?

7 MR. EICHHORN: No. We do a

8 certain amount of testing. We also do

9 hurricane drills. We have storm prep. We

10 have summer preparedness procedures that we

11 look at. So we go into the summer with a

12 bunch of activities that we perform. A bunch

13 of drills and a lot of testing of our

14 equipment.

15 LEGISLATOR FORD: So then where

16 do you think the failure was if you did this

17 type of testing? Do you test it like based on

18 like if everyone in Nassau County called you

19 or do you take like a certain percentage of

20 the number of residents or businesses that

21 would call after an outage?

22 MR. EICHHORN: That is a question

23 we have ourselves that's going to be a big

24 part of our after-action review. We know the

25 impact of what happened. Customers couldn't

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2    call us. They were getting busy signals. Our  
3    digital channels didn't work and part of our  
4    after-action review is to understand why  
5    exactly that happened. What do we have to do  
6    better in the future to test these systems  
7    that we have and really take a look at our  
8    preparation procedures as well as what  
9    particularly happened in this event.

10           LEGISLATOR FORD:     Then you also I  
11   guess when you were talking about like even  
12   with people who texted messaging or I guess  
13   maybe emailing or was it just texting when we  
14   do the app where people can report the  
15   outages. I know that people like just reading  
16   different articles and hearing from different  
17   people they said that they texted and then all  
18   of a sudden they'd get a response from you to  
19   say that they're going to be repaired or this  
20   is what's happening and then all of a sudden  
21   the next day they wait, they text again, they  
22   get a different message. It seems like maybe  
23   the messages that you were sending out  
24   text-wise when people texted were more of a  
25   general response rather than an individual

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2 response. Do you think that that was the  
3 case?

4 MR. EICHHORN: That's what we  
5 have to look into. We know customers -- our  
6 restoration times changed multiple times.  
7 Sometimes that's the result of what we call  
8 embedded outage. But we also feel some of the  
9 issues that we had with the communications  
10 systems at the start of the storm created some  
11 of those multiple ETRs. But that's part of  
12 what we really have to understand better and  
13 do that after-action review so we can take  
14 actions that are going to prevent it this the  
15 future.

16 LEGISLATOR FORD: Then I know you  
17 mentioned about the smart meters where you're  
18 able to then take a look at who is out of  
19 service at that time. Is there any way of  
20 coupling that like if you see that my house, I  
21 live on Ohio Avenue, you see my address is out  
22 of service. The system will report that  
23 myself and everyone else on my block is out of  
24 service. Is there any way that perhaps you  
25 can then take a look at that and work out a

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2       system so that a message can be generated to  
3       me. Like even to my home phone or like maybe  
4       do a reverse text to let me know that we know  
5       that you're out of service. We're in your  
6       area. We're hoping that maybe by Wednesday if  
7       we are able to get there.

8           Rather than having the resident  
9       trying to reach you that perhaps if you do a  
10      reverse communication it may cut down on the  
11      backlog of people trying to reach you. Or  
12      even if you made a phone call, like generated  
13      a call so that -- because it seemed like your  
14      incoming was the problem not so much the  
15      outgoing. So that if you have these meters  
16      where you are able to identify people and  
17      where they live that perhaps then you would be  
18      able to then reach out to us, be more  
19      proactive than reactive then letting us know  
20      that you're aware that I have no service and  
21      you're looking to make sure that we can get  
22      back in service.

23           MR. EICHHORN:      That will be a big  
24      part of our after-action review. We did use  
25      our smart meters in this event to really

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2 supplement our outage management system. We  
3 were pinging meters. We can do that at any  
4 time. If we suspect a customer is out of  
5 service we are able to send a signal. If that  
6 meter responds to us then we get confirmation  
7 that it's in power. And that was something  
8 that really was beneficial during this storm.

9 As I mentioned, some of the  
10 communication issues, the IT issues, made it  
11 difficult for us to distinguish what work in  
12 our system was actual and what work was  
13 duplicative. We used our smart meters to help  
14 sort through that but it was a manual process  
15 compared to in the past it would be more  
16 automated.

17 LEGISLATOR FORD: Right. I think  
18 that from what I gather like just reading some  
19 things even in the papers that people because  
20 they weren't getting a response. So that you  
21 had people that were constantly texting you or  
22 constantly calling you. It might have been  
23 the same person who may have sent like maybe  
24 ten or 20 messages. So maybe if you could  
25 work out something so that you could cut down

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2 on that so it would be a better flow of -- so  
3 that when people who are just making the  
4 initial complaint. But sometimes if you could  
5 like let them know before they reach you that  
6 you're aware that they are out of service I  
7 think that would give a level of confidence to  
8 the residents knowing that you are aware that  
9 they have no power.

10 MR. EICHHORN: Correct. I think  
11 it's going to be one of our items that we'll  
12 look at. I do think there's a great potential  
13 there to use the smart meters to avoid  
14 customers even having to call us at some point  
15 in time.

16 LEGISLATOR FORD: Do you have a  
17 disaster recovery plan? Do you have something  
18 where you can set up like say if your  
19 infrastructure was badly damaged, say the  
20 storm came through at one of your central  
21 locations -- we remember the blackout in the  
22 northeast what was it, 14 years ago or  
23 something like that, do you have a backup plan  
24 for yourself? So that if something happens  
25 you would be able to switch to something where

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2 you'll still be able to keep up your  
3 communications so that you can respond to the  
4 residents and the businesses?

5 MR. EICHHORN: We do. All of our  
6 departments and all of our systems have we  
7 call them business continuity plans. We have  
8 plans if our system goes down, if a building  
9 is without power or damaged, we have business  
10 continuity plans that we would use to kick in  
11 and provide the service to customers.

12 LEGISLATOR FORD: I have two  
13 questions from one of the other legislators  
14 that sent it in to us. He writes on Friday,  
15 August 7 at 1:53 I received the following  
16 email from PSE&G indicating that the vast  
17 majority of work would be completed by  
18 Saturday August 8th. Looking at the outage  
19 map of my district alone there are hundreds of  
20 outages. It is physically impossible to  
21 repair the majority by Saturday. Why was the  
22 information sent out when it could not  
23 possibly have been correct and who made the  
24 determination to send out this information?  
25 This is from Legislator McKevitt.

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2 MR. EICHHORN: Sure. One of the  
3 unique things with this storm was just the  
4 amount of damage. We have work flow models  
5 that we use when we are in a storm. We look  
6 at the amount of work we are holding and we  
7 project out and make an estimated restoration  
8 time for customers. We then divide those  
9 customers by the day and when we're going to  
10 restore their power and we notify them of when  
11 we'll restore their power.

12 In this storm, what we found is  
13 when our crews were out working, instead of  
14 finding one damaged location to restore a  
15 neighborhood it was multiple damaged  
16 locations. And those models that we were  
17 using proved to be much more optimistic than  
18 what our crews were seeing in this damage and  
19 we were roughly getting about a third of the  
20 work done that we had projected and what we  
21 had accomplished in past storms.

22 Coupled with a constant influx of  
23 new work. The days proceeding this storm we  
24 got as much work on a Wednesday and a Thursday  
25 as we would typically in a major storm. That

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2 was unprecedented. It was something that we  
3 built into our forecast a certain amount of  
4 work because we know that a hanging tree, a  
5 hanging limb, a leaning tree could fall over  
6 at any time. But the amount of new work that  
7 was coming in was really unprecedented  
8 compared to any other storm we had. And then  
9 just the sheer volume of work that needed to  
10 be done to restore each area was much greater  
11 than past storms.

12 We did make adjustments in our  
13 model. Every day we had more crews coming in  
14 from out of state. We changed some of our  
15 processes trying to make sure we were getting  
16 the work out to people. They made  
17 improvements but not enough to counter for the  
18 two things, which was new work coming in then  
19 in a typical storm it's nominal and we will  
20 prioritize it with the day's work and we  
21 typically can get it all done. In this case  
22 it wasn't nominal and the restoration that we  
23 were seeing was just so extensive our past  
24 models really did not work.

25 LEGISLATOR FORD: You were saying

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2 that then I guess when you were giving this  
3 information out like saying that people would  
4 be restored by like Wednesday or Thursday it  
5 basically was a model that you had set up  
6 based on past occurrences with storms that you  
7 would anticipate?

8 MR. EICHHORN: Correct.

9 LEGISLATOR FORD: When did you  
10 then switch over I hope then to reaching out  
11 to the linemen, the crews that were outside  
12 working and asking them how much did they  
13 accomplish and what were they seeing so that  
14 you could then -- did you incorporate that  
15 information into the model that you were then  
16 looking at?

17 MR. EICHHORN: We did. Where  
18 that had the biggest impact, we were pretty  
19 much on our restoration schedule through  
20 Thursday. We had restored many of the  
21 transmission lines. Our substations were back  
22 online. The interconnection lines were back.  
23 We had 384 major circuits throughout the  
24 island that were restored and they're  
25 typically the lines that run on the major

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2   roads throughout the island. They were all  
3   restored by about 4 p.m. on Thursday.

4           Where we really got into that area  
5   where we started to find tremendous damage was  
6   when we were in the neighborhoods. We call  
7   then area outs and it could be anywhere from  
8   ten customers to 500 customers. In those  
9   areas that's where we started to hear back  
10   from the crews that there was significant  
11   damage. The time it was taking them even to  
12   restore five customers on a dead end street  
13   was significant. That they had multiple  
14   locations of clearing trees, putting wires  
15   back up in the air, replacing poles. And at  
16   that point we already had set many of the  
17   estimated restoration times for customers.

18           As I mentioned, we had more crews  
19   coming in each day and we were doing work load  
20   meetings to see how much we were completing.  
21   We were doing those twice a day and probably  
22   in the Friday, Saturday time frame we realized  
23   that the amount of damage was not working with  
24   our models and we adjusted from there.

25           LEGISLATOR FORD:     My last

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2 question because I know that many people, one  
3 of the big issues that a lot of people did  
4 write to us about was that moving forward what  
5 is the possibility of starting to move some of  
6 our power lines underground so that we're not  
7 subjected to these outages for long periods of  
8 time? Considering that a lot of times the  
9 reason why we are without power is tree limbs  
10 are taking these lines down. Is that  
11 something that PSE&G will consider and is  
12 looking into?

13 MR. EICHHORN: Every time we run  
14 a new line we look at the considerations of  
15 whether that line should go underground or  
16 overhead. We primarily are an overhead  
17 utility where we would put the line overhead  
18 unless there were certain circumstances where  
19 we felt for liability, for esthetics that we  
20 would put the line underground.

21 To start to bury all the lines is  
22 something that would be extremely expensive  
23 and would take many years, more like decades  
24 to do. It's something that I think if  
25 customers really wanted that it's something

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2 that we would look at, but it would be an  
3 expensive proposition.

4 LEGISLATOR FORD: But I guess  
5 maybe you could look at some of the areas  
6 where they seem to have the most outages due  
7 to the trees that it might be something  
8 that -- so you could lessen the number of  
9 people without service. It might be worth  
10 looking into. I'm going to yield. Legislator  
11 Rhoads.

12 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you for  
13 your presentation president Eichhorn. We  
14 certainly appreciate you being here. Just a  
15 couple of follow-up questions. I know that a  
16 bunch of legislators have questions as well so  
17 I will keep my questions brief.

18 PSEG's presence here on Long Island  
19 was born out of really the failures during  
20 Superstorm Sandy. Yet we seem to see many of  
21 the same mistakes that were made during  
22 Superstorm Sandy and the response duplicated  
23 in the response here.

24 Coming in, obviously PSE&G Long  
25 Island I'm sure one of the first things that

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2 you did is take a look at the Sandy response  
3 to try and find things they did well, things  
4 that they didn't do as well and to try and  
5 plan for those. What did you view as being  
6 the weaknesses of the prior response to  
7 Superstorm Sandy and how did you try to make  
8 the outcomes from -- I always hate to try and  
9 pronounce this, you did well with it -- Isaias  
10 different?

11 MR. EICHHORN: So, from 2014 we  
12 have a very detailed storm response plan. We  
13 have been extremely successful in past storms,  
14 the nor'easters in 2019. We had four  
15 nor'easters in the month. We've had 125,000  
16 customer outages. I know it's difficult to  
17 just accept this but we really feel this storm  
18 was an anomaly. It's not the expectations we  
19 have. It's not what we pride ourselves on.  
20 We were prepared. The IT issues and system  
21 issues that we had really had an impact on  
22 many of the things that we discussed.

23 LEGISLATOR RHODES: I understand  
24 that but I don't necessarily understand how we  
25 would consider this storm to be an anomaly.

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2 We do sit on Long Island. We do periodically  
3 receive hurricanes, receive tropical storms.  
4 Obviously Superstorm Sandy was essentially a  
5 superstorm, tropical storm slash level one  
6 hurricane. So it's not unprecedented that we  
7 would have a storm of this type and of this  
8 magnitude. I'm struggling to understand why  
9 it was that we had such what was perceived to  
10 be a slow response and such poor communication  
11 in response to this particular storm.

12 I think one of the most frustrating  
13 things from the standpoint of a customer is  
14 the fact you couldn't get accurate information  
15 and you couldn't get timely information. So  
16 it feels as though you are literally out there  
17 on an island. You have no idea what's  
18 happening. No way of being able to plan. And  
19 then the little bit of information you get  
20 from PSE&G turns out being wrong.

21 I know from my own standpoint we  
22 received notifications that our power -- we  
23 went out actually the day before the storm on  
24 Monday night. There was a little thunderstorm  
25 that knocked our power out. We were told

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2 power would be restored by five o'clock the  
3 next morning. We were told it would restored  
4 by Wednesday, then Friday, then Saturday, then  
5 Sunday. Actually wound up for us being  
6 restored on Thursday. But it's that  
7 frustration that's really driving some of the  
8 anger out there.

9 I know you said you are going to be  
10 analyzing the system and ways that you can  
11 improve but we've had since 2014 and you have  
12 been here since 2014 working on your  
13 communication system. What are you going to  
14 do differently that's going to prevent a  
15 failure of not only your text messaging  
16 system, your online system and telephone  
17 system as well. It was a trifecta of  
18 disastrous communication at every level. And  
19 then if you could get answers that information  
20 was incorrect. What specific plan does PSE&G  
21 have to address that in future storms? We are  
22 actually early in hurricane season now.

23 MR. EICHHORN: Just to clarify, I  
24 meant our response to the storm I think you  
25 will find was an anomaly, not the storm

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2       itself. We agree we expect more storms and we  
3       expect to be prepared. Part of our action,  
4       after-action review is really to look at  
5       that. Our digital channels have really been  
6       adopted by our customers. We see as many  
7       customers use those channels as they do call  
8       us. We know the outcome, right, that they  
9       weren't performing. What we really have to do  
10      is understand why. We've taken interim  
11      actions. We're monitoring our systems to make  
12      sure they're not getting overloaded and we're  
13      doing a deep dive after-action review to  
14      understand exactly what occurred so that we  
15      can fix the root cause of the problem.

16               LEGISLATOR RHOADS:     How long do  
17      you anticipate that after-action review taking  
18      place? When is PSE&G going to have concrete  
19      steps that they're taking to be able to  
20      address some of the clear deficiencies that we  
21      saw in the response here?

22               MR. EICHHORN:       We are diligently  
23      working on that. We're working 16 hours a day  
24      trying to identify those root causes. It's  
25      difficult to say exactly the time frame of

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2       them because we haven't identified the root  
3       causes of the fixes as of yet. But we are  
4       committed to making sure we get those changes  
5       in as soon as possible.

6                   LEGISLATOR RHOADS:       I understand  
7       that but we're in a situation here as we said  
8       we're in the middle of hurricane season now.  
9       You could have the next major storm a week  
10      from now, two weeks from now, a month from  
11      now. We don't have the benefit of having time  
12      to sort of learn on the fly here. I  
13      understand this may take time and I understand  
14      you can't give a clear time frame as to when  
15      that's going to happen but I want to stress  
16      the urgency behind identifying the problems,  
17      fixing the problems to make sure this doesn't  
18      happen again.

19                   MR. EICHHORN:       We understand that  
20      urgency. The other thing that if a storm was  
21      coming tomorrow we know what to expect now  
22      internally. We would be staffed, we would be  
23      implementing some of our business continuity  
24      plans and we would know what to expect.

25                   In this storm there were things we

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2 mentioned did not perform as expected. We  
3 know going forward until those root cause  
4 analysis after-action reports are completed we  
5 will be operating with increased monitoring on  
6 the system with the interim changes we've  
7 already made to stabilize the system and we  
8 will be implementing some of the manual  
9 processes so we are ready in the short term  
10 and more ready in the long term.

11 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: In terms  
12 of -- I know that you have an aggressive tree  
13 trimming program that takes place certainly  
14 during the summers. Did the tree trimming  
15 program at all benefit the response to this  
16 particular storm?

17 MR. EICHHORN: We believe all the  
18 work we've done over the last six years had a  
19 great benefit in this storm. We have data  
20 that shows in the year after we tree trim it's  
21 about a 45 percent reduction in outages. That  
22 as time goes on gets a little bit lower but it  
23 has a significant benefit.

24 We also storm hardened about a  
25 1,000 miles of the system. That was through

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2 FEMA funding that was granted after Superstorm  
3 Sandy. And we have data that has similar  
4 results. When we storm harden we tighten the  
5 span of the wires. Shorter cross arms, more  
6 sturdy poles, better hardware. And we see the  
7 same thing in those storms. If a lot of that  
8 work was not done and we didn't do the tree  
9 trimming that we did we really believe  
10 strongly that this storm would have had a much  
11 bigger impact on the island and the number of  
12 customers that lost power.

13 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Is there  
14 going to be any changes as a result of the  
15 storm to the tree trimming program?

16 MR. EICHHORN: That will be part  
17 of our after-action review. We will look at  
18 that amongst many other things.

19 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Having  
20 communicated with other levels of government,  
21 one of the frustrations in this response is  
22 not only is it a question of power but it's a  
23 question of inconvenience to residents that  
24 the response from many of the town, even the  
25 county, the townships in the county, was

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2 slower for example in clearing roadways  
3 because of the Made Safe to Clear program.

4 So, my district lies entirety  
5 within the Town of Hempstead. Town of  
6 Hempstead was having difficulty as was  
7 reported to me being able to get permission to  
8 clear roadways. So we had residents that not  
9 only didn't have power but depending on where  
10 the particular tree was down had no way to get  
11 in or out of their community or in and out of  
12 their block or out of their development. What  
13 were the failures in the Made Safe to Clear  
14 program in your estimation and how are those  
15 going to be remedied?

16 MR. EICHHORN: We will look at  
17 that as part of our after-action review as  
18 well. Just the sheer volume. Typically in a  
19 storm we will use our on-the-ground employees  
20 to do the Make Safe to Clear work and have  
21 them work with public works and town and local  
22 county officials to clear the roads.

23 In this storm we actually added  
24 some of the off-island crews to that process.  
25 In some areas I think it was very successful

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2 and in other areas people would have liked to  
3 have had more crews. We are going to take a  
4 look at that. It was a balance. The more  
5 crews we put on the work to clear the roads  
6 the fewer crews that we had to restore power.  
7 But this storm was one of the first times that  
8 we used line personnel coming from out of  
9 state to team up with the municipal workers  
10 and clear those roads.

11 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: What's  
12 involved in Make Safe to Clear? I'm assuming  
13 somebody has to go out, inspect the lines to  
14 see whether it's live and remove the line  
15 theoretically from whatever is entangling it.  
16 Is that essentially what the Make Safe to  
17 Clear program is?

18 MR. EICHHORN: Correct.

19 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: In your  
20 estimation from this storm was it that  
21 sufficient that you didn't have enough people  
22 doing that?

23 MR. EICHHORN: I really have to  
24 wait to do the review to have a better handle  
25 on that.

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2 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: When you're  
3 doing your after-action review that is  
4 critically important not only from the power  
5 restoration standpoint but, as I said,  
6 residents were trapped on their blocks but  
7 more importantly emergency vehicles couldn't  
8 get access to them if there was a problem  
9 because you couldn't make access to the  
10 roadway.

11 Several more questions on that but  
12 I'm going to move on because I know we're  
13 limited on time.

14 In terms of identifying critical  
15 care customers, what outreach efforts are made  
16 by PSE&G to put people on that list? Because  
17 I was receiving phone calls in my office from  
18 individuals that were on oxygen, from  
19 individuals that had motorized wheelchairs  
20 that needed to be charge, individuals that for  
21 a variety of medical reasons needed to have  
22 their power restored. What kind of outreach  
23 efforts are made to customers so that they can  
24 get themselves on that list and to communicate  
25 with customers in the event of an emergency to

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2 give them enhanced updates or information as  
3 to when they can expect power to be restored?  
4 Because it's critically important for them to  
5 be able to plan for their own safety and  
6 families when they have special needs.

7 MR. EICHHORN: We do have a  
8 critical customer list. It's customers that  
9 are on life support equipment. Prior to a  
10 storm we will notify every one of those  
11 customers about the storm. So, when a storm  
12 is coming we will call them, let them know,  
13 make arrangements, preparation in case they do  
14 lose power they're prepared. After a storm we  
15 look at every one of those customers who lost  
16 power and we call them. If we don't reach  
17 them after three calls we will make a wellness  
18 visit or coordinate with local social services  
19 to make a visit out there.

20 That information is available on  
21 our website, and I would have to check as to  
22 how often do we communicate the process and  
23 the availability of that program. I don't  
24 know that off the top of my head.

25 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Given the

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2     number of outages that there were and the  
3     amount of repairs that had to be made, how  
4     confident are you as we sit here today in the  
5     integrity of the overall system to be able to  
6     withstand another storm? Again, drawing on my  
7     own personal experience, as I told you my  
8     power went out on Monday night, was out until  
9     Thursday night. But it went out again I  
10    believe on Sunday for five hours. Then any  
11    power went out again during a gust of wind  
12    basically for 45 minutes yesterday. It seems  
13    as though if we get another storm, I don't  
14    know what repairs were made in my area but  
15    what efforts are being undertaken to harden  
16    those repairs? And do you believe the system  
17    as it stands right now can withstand another  
18    storm?

19                   MR. EICHHORN:     That's a wide  
20    variety of questions. This storm clocked  
21    winds at 75 miles-an-hour. Very damaging  
22    storm. I do believe the system is back to its  
23    original configuration. We do have follow-up  
24    work which we have in every storm. Our focus  
25    in a storm is to restore customers. Sometimes

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2       we will put things up temporarily. We will  
3       make a note. We go back. Usually takes a  
4       week or two weeks to make all permanent  
5       repairs. But many of the repairs we make  
6       during the storm are permanent as well.

7           I think the system is in good shape  
8       to withstand the next storm. It really  
9       depends on the characteristics of the storm.  
10      Each storm has a little bit different  
11      challenges. This storm was more wind. The  
12      rains were relatively minor. The flooding was  
13      minor. If you were to compare that to Sandy  
14      one of the big challenges in Sandy was the  
15      flooding and we raised all of our substations  
16      in flooded areas. That was a great move.  
17      Something that will protect the system. But  
18      in this particular storm that really had no  
19      benefit because this storm didn't bring the  
20      flooding that Sandy did.

21           I do believe our system is in a  
22      good position to withstand the next storm, but  
23      with any storm we always would expect outages  
24      somewhere.

25           LEGISLATOR RHOADS:       In terms of

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2       critical infrastructure, what efforts does  
3       PSE&G take to identify critical infrastructure  
4       and how is your response different with  
5       respect to that infrastructure?

6           MR. EICHHORN:     Critical  
7       infrastructure internally or critical --

8           LEGISLATOR RHOADS:     For example,  
9       Empire Hose Company Three on Merrick Avenue in  
10      Merrick. Merrick was a community that was  
11      heavily impacted by this particular storm. I  
12      had reached out to PSE&G on three different  
13      occasions because that firehouse was out of  
14      power and at one point in time their generator  
15      failed. So essentially that fire station is  
16      dead in the water and that particular fire  
17      station services all of basically Merrick  
18      south of Sunrise Highway. Theoretically  
19      couldn't even open up their doors, couldn't  
20      charge their equipment.

21                   What steps does PSE&G take to  
22      identify places like that firehouse and try  
23      and restore power as quickly as possible so  
24      that they can get out and protect the  
25      community?

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2 MR. EICHHORN: We have many  
3 efforts that we do. We do have a critical  
4 customer list. They are identified in our  
5 system. They're broken into several  
6 priorities. Some of the ones in the top  
7 priority is what you would expect. Hospitals,  
8 municipal buildings. The next tier down would  
9 be nursing homes. Other facilities of that  
10 nature. So we have multiple tiers.

11 What we really look to rely on is  
12 having our municipal liaisons, having our  
13 external government affairs groups work with  
14 the local town officials to prioritize them.

15 We also have what we call the  
16 municipal portal which allows any municipal  
17 official that's registered to go in and see  
18 the critical facilities in their town that are  
19 impacted by the storm. They can prioritize  
20 the critical facilities and we will take that  
21 into our prioritization so that we prioritize,  
22 align with the normal restoration process as  
23 well as what our government officials are  
24 asking us to prioritize.

25 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I have been

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2 an elected official now for five and a half  
3 years. This is the first that I'm hearing  
4 about our ability to have input into that  
5 process. How do we actually access that?

6 MR. EICHHORN: We can get you  
7 that information and we can train you and show  
8 you how to get into that system.

9 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Please do.  
10 If you can get us that information we would  
11 like to get that done as quickly as we can.

12 Just two last questions and then  
13 I'll move on and if there's time I will  
14 follow-up at the end.

15 My understanding is Con Edison, for  
16 example, has for customers that lost the  
17 contents of their refrigerators during the  
18 course of the storm, which given the  
19 challenging times that we have now and given  
20 the fact that so many people purchased  
21 additional supplies with concerns about food  
22 certainty as a result of COVID, wherein they  
23 can get reimbursed for some of the food that  
24 they lost. Does PSE&G have any plans to do  
25 that for its customers here on Long Island?

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2 MR. EICHHORN: We are in  
3 discussion with LIPA to have a policy  
4 similar. That could have been resolved as we  
5 are sitting here today but I don't have a date  
6 on that. We are discussing it and working  
7 through some of the details with LIPA on that.

8 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Can we  
9 anticipate that there's going to be some sort  
10 of program announced within the next week,  
11 within the next two weeks? I know you just  
12 said you are in the process of discussing  
13 that. But is there some sort of time table  
14 for when you can go out with the public --  
15 they're spending the money now to replace what  
16 they lost -- is there some idea as to when  
17 they can have an expectation of being able to  
18 get reimbursement?

19 MR. EICHHORN: I would say there  
20 would be a decision sometime this week if not  
21 sooner.

22 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Would that  
23 come in the form of a bill credit or would  
24 that come as an actual direct payment to  
25 customers seeking reimbursement?

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2 MR. EICHHORN: I would have to  
3 get the details on that. As I mentioned, it's  
4 in discussion but as of the start of this  
5 meeting it hasn't been resolved.

6 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: My final  
7 question for this particular round. Will  
8 there be some sort of bill credit for  
9 customers with respect to the days that they  
10 were out of power? For example, as part of  
11 your base bill or base rent I guess for the  
12 service, base local service, there's a per day  
13 charge for that base level service. So for  
14 the days that customers weren't provided that  
15 service are they going to see some sort of  
16 impact on their bills?

17 MR. EICHHORN: We have not had  
18 that discussion to date. Obviously customers  
19 pay by their usage. When they're out of power  
20 they're not using power they wouldn't be  
21 charged for anything there. But we have not  
22 had discussions on a credit for the base fee.

23 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I know they  
24 pay for their usage but there's also a basic  
25 service fee on the delivering system charges

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2 based on I guess per day fee for operation.  
3 It looks like it's 42 cents a day based on the  
4 rates that are approved by the Public Service  
5 Commission. That's specifically what I am  
6 referring to. For the days that are lost will  
7 there be any credit with respect to that? I  
8 know if they're not using power they don't get  
9 charged for it. But there is a specific basic  
10 service charge which is a per day charge not  
11 based on usage.

12 MR. EICHHORN: Correct. No, we  
13 have not made any decisions on that as of  
14 today.

15 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: When do you  
16 anticipate the decisions would be made? Just  
17 out of curiosity though, from a philosophical  
18 standpoint how can you charge somebody for a  
19 service that's not provided?

20 MR. EICHHORN: It's something  
21 that we can look at as part of our  
22 after-action review. But as we kind of  
23 alluded to in my opening, many of us just  
24 finished restoration last week. There's a lot  
25 of things we want to look at and we can

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2 include that in our after-action review as  
3 well.

4 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I  
5 understand. I just hope you understand you  
6 guys are the only game in town. That puts an  
7 additional obligation on you to make sure you  
8 get things right. And when things go wrong to  
9 put in the work and put in the effort in  
10 trying to make improvements to make it right.  
11 It's not as though normal market forces apply  
12 here where there are multiple choices and if I  
13 don't like the service that you're providing I  
14 can go to somebody else. I can't do that.  
15 Just the reality.

16 So, we need you guys to step up to  
17 the plate to really take a deep dive to use  
18 your term into what went wrong here and what  
19 you can do to make it right for customers not  
20 only in response to this storm but in response  
21 to future storms. I hope you understand that  
22 obligation.

23 MR. EICHHORN: We understand.

24 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you  
25 Madam Chairwoman.

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2 LEGISLATOR FORD: Take a hard  
3 look at that and make it a priority. A lot of  
4 the people who lost their food probably have  
5 been out of work because of coronavirus. That  
6 stimulus check, that \$600 extra a week for  
7 those unemployed is gone now. They're living  
8 just basically day-to-day. A lot of people  
9 don't have enough food. I urge you please at  
10 least take a look at those that are having  
11 problems paying their rent, trying to live  
12 here and trying to make due and make them a  
13 priority to try to get them -- at least give  
14 them a check so that they can purchase their  
15 food.

16 Legislator DeRiggi-Whitton.

17 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:  
18 Thank you Madam Chair. Hi. I represent the  
19 Glen Cove area, North Shore, which also was  
20 hit pretty hard in this storm. From what I  
21 understand with this storm it was very fast  
22 moving. The average wind was approximately 35  
23 miles-per-hour with gusts of 70 and we had  
24 between two to three inches of rain. Is that  
25 the statistics that you have as well?

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2 MR. EICHHORN: We had winds  
3 clocked at McArthur Airport at 75 and also,  
4 forget which airport, one of the New York City  
5 airports, had winds in the same range.

6 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: But  
7 the average winds from what I have been told  
8 was around 35 miles-per-hour for the three  
9 hours that this storm was in our area.

10 MR. EICHHORN: Sustained.

11 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:  
12 Sustained winds of 35 miles-an-hour. Two  
13 inches of rain, gusts to 75. I think we're  
14 all up here saying this was not the big storm  
15 that we're afraid of getting and the reaction  
16 to it was much more difficult than we would  
17 expect. We can't say, like Legislator Rhoads  
18 said, that we're not going to have another one  
19 or even a hurricane category one or anything  
20 even bigger. We could have it in the next  
21 couple of weeks.

22 To have a three-hour storm -- I was  
23 actually outside for part of it. There were  
24 some gusts and we did get some damage  
25 definitely. I'm not mitigating the damage we

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2       received. But there could be much worse  
3       coming and we just feel the reaction to this  
4       one was extremely poor. Especially after the  
5       anticipation of hearing that we were  
6       anticipating this storm, we were ready for it.

7           I know we spent millions and  
8       millions of dollars on tree trimming. We pay  
9       like the third highest in the nation for our  
10      energy and our electric. So, it's not only  
11      that we expect more but we've been told to  
12      expect more. That we were going to be able to  
13      handle this type of thing. This is not a  
14      hurricane. It wasn't close even to Superstorm  
15      Sandy.

16          I just have a couple of  
17      suggestions. I agree with everything that my  
18      co-legislators discussed. When some of the  
19      crews came from out of state we had a few stay  
20      in a parking lot of North Shore High School  
21      pretty much at least the whole day. I think  
22      it was Wednesday possibly Thursday. They were  
23      actually asking municipal people locally what  
24      they should do or where -- they really had no  
25      direction whatsoever.

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2 I really think you have to come up  
3 with some plan as soon as they come across the  
4 border you are in contact with them and they  
5 know where to go and what to do. They also  
6 have to be met by some local person. It  
7 really delayed the repair time in my opinion  
8 by days probably because we did see a number  
9 of them. They weren't obvious. We saw them  
10 in certain places. It wasn't even the crew  
11 people's fault. They didn't know what to do  
12 or where to go. I think that's something we  
13 can figure out very quickly with  
14 communications. You know they're coming.  
15 They have to know where to go and someone has  
16 to meet with them immediately so they can go  
17 out and not even miss four or five hours.  
18 That could be hundreds of homes.

19 My other point is, some of the  
20 trucks it sounds like, our local trucks, are  
21 not equipped to fix certain things. We had  
22 some show up and then say we don't have this,  
23 we don't have that. It seems like our local  
24 trucks are not ready to do the work as  
25 decently as the out of town trucks. Are you

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2 aware of that, that some of the trucks go to  
3 research it and look at it and don't have any  
4 equipment on there to fix the problem?

5 MR. EICHHORN: A lot of things  
6 you mentioned we will look into in our  
7 after-action review. Our process during the  
8 storm is once all of our crews are assigned  
9 work we send out people to survey the area and  
10 they're not equipped and they're not expected  
11 to be equipped to fix the problem. What  
12 they're really doing is trying to identify the  
13 type of wire, the pole size and the equipment  
14 and really make it more efficient for the  
15 crews that will follow-up.

16 So we have a certain number of  
17 office people, engineering folks, who will go  
18 out ahead of the job so that the crew's not  
19 inefficient. Our focus in a storm is really  
20 to keep the crews as efficient as possible.  
21 If we can front run those jobs, identify the  
22 material and have that ready for the crews it  
23 will make the crews be able to do their work  
24 faster.

25 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I

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2 think the frustration came in the fact that  
3 those crews that were just basically  
4 evaluating the damage were there four days  
5 after the storm when people were desperate to  
6 have their power turned on and then to only  
7 find out that the crews couldn't repair it.

8 Just a couple of quick things.  
9 Legislator Birnbaum mentioned in one of those  
10 conference calls that we were on with the  
11 elected and I will say that Kim Kaiman and a  
12 number of them did a very good job. They were  
13 messengers and they got beat up. So are we.  
14 That's our role in this too.

15 So, I was coming home on Thursday  
16 evening crossing over Glen Cove Road from the  
17 Northern State, a pretty busy intersection,  
18 and the light was out still. That was 48  
19 hours plus after the storm. That's a  
20 dangerous intersection. When we spoke on the  
21 call we asked how do you go about prioritizing  
22 traffic lights? We were told, I don't know  
23 I'm if it's true or not, that you had no idea  
24 what traffic lights were working and not  
25 working based on your information. Is that

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2 true?

3 MR. EICHHORN: I would have to  
4 look into that. Most traffic lights are on  
5 those main circuits that I mentioned. So they  
6 typically are prioritized and get back sooner  
7 just by virtue of the circuit they're  
8 connected to. I'd have to look into the  
9 details in that specific case. It could have  
10 been connected to a secondary line. I really  
11 don't know. I'd have to look at those  
12 details.

13 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I  
14 think having a good way to trace traffic  
15 lights is basic. Just talk about safety.

16 The other thing they said is that  
17 they can't -- this is just from the call and I  
18 don't want to get anyone in trouble -- they  
19 said they couldn't really identify where the  
20 traffic lights were looking at the grid. That  
21 they would have to work with our DPW to try to  
22 get a map to overlay. If you go on GPS coming  
23 home you see where all the traffic lights  
24 are. I don't see how a company that's  
25 spending millions and millions of dollars in

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2 preparation for a storm you don't have the  
3 basics like even as to where the traffic  
4 lights are on a major roadway. It has to be  
5 improved. We really expect it to be a higher  
6 level with the amount that we're spending.

7 Glen Cove lost water because the  
8 wells were also affected. They had no power.  
9 We had a water crisis in the middle of all  
10 this. It was just a major issue. I know that  
11 there was an accident in someone's backyard in  
12 Roslyn who still had a live wire four or five  
13 days after the storm. These are just in my  
14 district. I can imagine what everyone else  
15 has.

16 We lost the phones. People were  
17 calling they lost the phones. Then we had the  
18 emails. Email went out on your system. How  
19 does an email crash I don't know but it did.  
20 Then we had the port which worked for a couple  
21 of days but that also crashed. So all three  
22 mechanisms crashed during the storm.

23 I almost believe like kind of what  
24 Legislator Ford, to tell someone they're  
25 getting their power back on Friday night at

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2   three or Friday afternoon at three and then  
3   not have it come through is almost worse than  
4   saying all right, we have your report we'll --  
5   you know, almost worse to give a definite time  
6   and not make it then to not give a definite  
7   time in my opinion because then our  
8   credibility, which was what I was depending  
9   on, went down the tubes.

10           The last thing I want to also  
11   piggyback on with my co-legislators is  
12   reimbursing. I think it would be a good faith  
13   effort for your company to reimburse our  
14   customers for at least the food they lost. I  
15   hope it's not going to be a very difficult  
16   process. I know I don't keep my receipts from  
17   King Kullen. I think it should be basically  
18   maybe a like general good faith effort as to  
19   what people lost. Everyone lost food. It  
20   would be, I don't know, I think like the  
21   frustration is really what is so difficult  
22   right now. People have lost trust. And  
23   again, this was not the big storm we're  
24   worried about going forward. I think it would  
25   be a good gesture. That's all I have. Thank

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2 you.

3 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator

4 Kopel.

5 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Thank you

6 Madam Chair. Good morning Mr. Eichhorn.

7 People have been talking largely about what  
8 happened during this storm and efforts to  
9 restore matters. I'd like to focus just a  
10 little bit on prevention going forward. It's  
11 more important what happened happened and we  
12 can learn from it. So, PSE&G is basically a  
13 northeastern utility, right? The various  
14 branches?

15 MR. EICHHORN: We operate mainly  
16 in New Jersey.

17 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: New Jersey and  
18 New York now and Long Island, right. So, when  
19 you develop your planning procedures how is  
20 this done? Who does it? Planning the storms.

21 MR. EICHHORN: We have an  
22 emergency preparedness group that focuses on  
23 it for the most part year round. We also have  
24 what we call asset management team that looks  
25 at best practices across the utility and

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2     identifies how frequently we should be  
3     inspecting poles, what should our tree trim  
4     standards be, how often do we trim and do  
5     maintenance work in substations and the  
6     trimming on transmission lines.

7           LEGISLATOR KOPEL:     As you  
8     mentioned quite early on in your presentation,  
9     the storm seemed to be getting to be more  
10    frequent and more severe.  Wouldn't it be  
11    useful at this point to maybe adopt on a large  
12    scale some of the southeastern utility best  
13    practices manual?  They've been going through  
14    this for many, many years and it seems like  
15    they're dealing with it quite effectively.  
16    Would that not be a good plan?

17          MR. EICHHORN:     I'm not 100  
18    percent sure what those procedures are.

19          LEGISLATOR KOPEL:     That's my  
20    point.

21          MR. EICHHORN:     We look at the  
22    best practices in the industry.  We feel we  
23    follow them.  Our reliability on Long Island  
24    has been greatly improved.  I know this storm  
25    lots of damage, but if you were to look

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2   outside of this our reliability was in the top  
3   25 percent in the country. So, all the work  
4   that we've done has made a tremendous  
5   improvement on the day-to-day reliability.

6           And a storm of this nature, I know  
7   this gets into some of the utility speak,  
8   there's a lot of factors that play into the  
9   amount of damage that occurs in the middle of  
10   the summer when the trees have full leaves on  
11   them and they're nice, big, healthy leaves,  
12   they act as a sail. I'm sure you've seen  
13   pictures of some of the size of the trees that  
14   have come over. We can tree trim and clear  
15   around the wires to where we call a box, but  
16   when a tree that's 30 feet away from our wires  
17   and it's 50 feet tall and it's on a customer's  
18   property falls over that's something that's  
19   tough to avoid.

20           LEGISLATOR KOPEL:     I recognize  
21   that as long as we have overhead wires and the  
22   cost of burying them is prohibitive, it's  
23   unrealistic certainly on an island-wide basis  
24   I get that. But as long as we have trees, big  
25   trees and storms and overhead wires we're

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2 going to have outages. I get that.

3 If you go down south what I've  
4 noticed in my travels over the years is that  
5 they've got overhead wires in many places  
6 too. But what they also have are concrete  
7 poles. In other words, if a tree comes down  
8 it may knock a wire off a pole but it's not  
9 going to knock down the pole and cause a  
10 domino effect on a bunch of other wires and  
11 poles.

12 Meanwhile, we seem to have a lot of  
13 rickety, old wooden poles and sometimes the  
14 double poles, which have been mentioned, which  
15 are certainly prone to -- they're old and  
16 decayed. Wood poles are going to decay  
17 inevitably. Those are the kind of best  
18 practices that I'm talking about. Are we  
19 looking into different materials with better  
20 foundation so that these poles don't fall  
21 over?

22 MR. EICHHORN: So that will be  
23 part of our after-action review. We have  
24 considered those in the past. The poles that  
25 we're using are much sturdier than the poles

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2       that have been used in the past. But we can  
3       look at that as part of our after-action  
4       review.

5                   LEGISLATOR KOPEL:     I would urge  
6       you to consider, as I say, looking at what the  
7       southeastern utilities, they face these storms  
8       all the time in Florida, Texas and so forth,  
9       in Louisiana, you know where it is.

10                   Moving on a little bit to the  
11       critical facilities which have been discussed  
12       a bit. For facilities such as hospitals or  
13       most of them do have backup generators but  
14       other critical facilities don't. Some fire  
15       stations may not. Some police stations may  
16       not. Do you have any emergency generators, a  
17       stock of those that you can rapidly distribute  
18       to some of the most critical facilities and  
19       should you have them if you don't?

20                   MR. EICHHORN:       We do have some  
21       generators and we did use some of them.

22                   LEGISLATOR KOPEL:     Maybe not  
23       enough?

24                   MR. EICHHORN:       For the damage in  
25       this storm not enough.

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2 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: As you say,  
3 they may be more severe. Will you look at  
4 perhaps maybe enhancing that stockpile?

5 MR. EICHHORN: Yes, we can look  
6 at that as part of our after-action review.

7 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: You mentioned  
8 also the smart meters, which are a great  
9 thing. What percentage of the meters that are  
10 currently deployed are smart meters?

11 MR. EICHHORN: Almost 60  
12 percent. We have about 625,000 smart meters  
13 of 1.1 million customer.

14 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: What is your  
15 anticipated schedule for going all smart  
16 metered?

17 MR. EICHHORN: That program was a  
18 four-year program. We're ahead of schedule.  
19 It was supposed to be completed at the end of  
20 2022, but it is also something that we will  
21 look at as part of our after-action review.  
22 It might be something that we make a decision  
23 to speed that up to assist in an event like we  
24 had.

25 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Because

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2   obviously at that point you'll know who's out  
3   and who's not. We understand that the  
4   facilities are -- you're dependent upon maybe  
5   Verizon or whatever phone facilities you use  
6   as well and customers calling in and not  
7   enough people maybe to handle the calls and so  
8   forth. This would eliminate that issue,  
9   wouldn't it? Or largely eliminate it?

10           MR. EICHHORN:     It would  
11   definitely be a help.

12           LEGISLATOR KOPEL:   I would once  
13   again urge that perhaps you look at that. All  
14   these things obviously whatever we do is going  
15   to factor into the new bills. That's how it  
16   works, right? Into the your rate  
17   calculations?

18           MR. EICHHORN:     It does. LIPA is  
19   a government-owned utility. There's no profit  
20   base. So essentially --

21           LEGISLATOR KOPEL:   Any  
22   reimbursements that was mentioned by a number  
23   of people and certainly the enhancement of  
24   facilities those are all going to go into your  
25   right base I would imagine, right?

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2 MR. EICHHORN: In general, the  
3 FEMA hardening work that we did one advantage  
4 LIPA has is it's government owned. It's  
5 available for FEMA funding. Superstorm Sandy  
6 much of the cost for restoration was paid for  
7 and reimbursed by FEMA. And when we talk  
8 about the hardening work we did that was a  
9 \$730 million program that FEMA funded.

10 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: That was great  
11 but this storm won't be eligible for that?  
12 This storm and the aftermath as far as we  
13 know, right?

14 MR. EICHHORN: I would have to  
15 check on that. I thought this storm was  
16 eligible for FEMA funding but I would have to  
17 check.

18 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: You've got  
19 some specialized state tax taxes which act as  
20 a multiplier. Sort of like the gross receipts  
21 tax. A special hidden state taxes that you've  
22 got in the rates. Does that apply here?

23 MR. EICHHORN: I don't know  
24 specifically what you're talking about. I can  
25 get that information for you. Part of the

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2 bill includes taxes.

3 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: It's just that  
4 the state taxes do tend I understand in these  
5 case as I say act as multiplier and make  
6 things more expensive. I think that's it.  
7 Thank you.

8 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator  
9 Mule.

10 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you Madam  
11 Chair. I'm going to be piggybacking a bit on  
12 what some of my colleagues have brought up. I  
13 want to start out with the people who have  
14 talked about having chronic outages. So not  
15 just necessarily from this storm but we've  
16 certainly been reading about and getting calls  
17 and emails from constituents who feel that  
18 they always get outages. So, I'm wondering  
19 what it is that you can do to address those  
20 issues?

21 We got a notice from a Hamilton  
22 Park that was on the north shore. And then  
23 certainly there are individuals who have  
24 contacted us stating that this is just kind of  
25 the last straw for them. Not that they can do

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2 anything about it. They feel that they're  
3 always going out not just necessarily with a  
4 storm. What can you do to harden the  
5 structures around them so that they're not  
6 subjected to chronic outages?

7 MR. EICHHORN: We do have several  
8 programs that address that. We measure the  
9 number of customers that have had four or more  
10 extended outages over a rolling 12 month  
11 period. When we identify those customers  
12 we'll inspect the circuit, the area. We'll do  
13 additional tree trimming. We'll look for any  
14 damaged or worn equipment that we replace. We  
15 have a program that we refer to as the Next  
16 Outage program where we anticipate customer  
17 maybe has three outages. Before they have  
18 that fourth we will go out and do similar  
19 activities. We inspect the lines. Do any  
20 type of line mitigation. Additional tree  
21 trimming. Looking for cross arms. Different  
22 equipment that might be deteriorating but  
23 hasn't failed to the point where it's caused  
24 an outage yet. It's something that we look  
25 at.

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2 We know it's frustrating when  
3 customers lose their power multiple times.  
4 That metric has actually greatly improved over  
5 the last few years the number of customers who  
6 have had multiple outages.

7 LEGISLATOR MULE: Is that  
8 something that the customers need to report or  
9 something that you are able to generate  
10 yourself?

11 MR. EICHHORN: No, we generate  
12 that ourselves.

13 LEGISLATOR MULE: If a customer  
14 wanted to report that would they be able to?

15 MR. EICHHORN: Sure.

16 LEGISLATOR MULE: If they felt  
17 hey, our power goes out a lot, who would they  
18 contact? Customer service?

19 MR. EICHHORN: Yeah. They would  
20 contact our customer service department.  
21 We've had customers in the past call us and  
22 tell us that they've had frequent outages and  
23 we will do the same, inspect their area, look  
24 at the records and look to make improvements  
25 in their circuit.

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2 LEGISLATOR MULE: Moving on to  
3 people who are the aged or the critically ill  
4 people who rely on power for say oxygen or to  
5 keep their medicines cool. That's a  
6 necessity. You testified that outreach is  
7 done for the people who you know about; is  
8 that correct?

9 MR. EICHHORN: Correct.

10 LEGISLATOR MULE: Prior to the  
11 storm and then after the storm?

12 MR. EICHHORN: Correct.

13 LEGISLATOR MULE: So, if people  
14 are not on that list, again, how do they get  
15 on? Do they have to contact? Do they have to  
16 make that outreach?

17 MR. EICHHORN: There's a  
18 process. It's on our website. They do have  
19 to notify us. There's a couple of steps they  
20 have to follow. It's a program that's been  
21 reviewed and approved by LIPA and the DPS.  
22 But there is a process that customers have to  
23 follow to get on that list.

24 LEGISLATOR MULE: My final  
25 question has to do with 911 calls. Was there

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2 ever -- do you have any notification or  
3 knowledge that people were not able to make  
4 911 calls or to get emergency services when  
5 they needed it as a result of the power  
6 outages?

7 MR. EICHHORN: I haven't heard  
8 those issues. I don't have any knowledge of  
9 that.

10 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you.

11 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator  
12 Kennedy.

13 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Thank you  
14 Madam Chairwoman. Good morning. Still is the  
15 morning. Obviously today I think there have  
16 been obviously problems that have been exposed  
17 and I know that you're working on those. One  
18 thing I'm curious is I know it seems there  
19 were four, 500 fewer workers that you  
20 requested. Do you think that had anything to  
21 do with the virus that we are currently living  
22 in or what do you attribute that to?

23 MR. EICHHORN: COVID-19 might  
24 have had a small impact in the number of  
25 workers that were willing to travel. I think

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2 the most impact was the storm came up the East  
3 Coast. Many utilities were not releasing  
4 employees because they wanted to see what the  
5 impact was on their service territory. Many  
6 states don't allow workers to leave until all  
7 the utilities within that particular state  
8 have restored their customers. So the bigger  
9 impact really was the path of the storm and  
10 the wide impact that it had.

11 We were fortunate, as I mentioned,  
12 we were the first ones to request crews  
13 through our North Atlantic Mutual Assistance  
14 Group. If we weren't requesting those on  
15 Sunday prior to the storm hitting it's a good  
16 chance we would have never received them.  
17 After the storm passed, many of the utilities  
18 in our area had similar damage and similar  
19 problems. So, a lot of the local utilities  
20 were competing. There's a process that we go  
21 through. You request the crews. There's  
22 multiple utilities requesting them. So  
23 there's a certain amount of crews that each  
24 utility will get. We continued to increase  
25 our request and as other utilities were

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2 releasing or the storm damage was cleaned up  
3 we never turned away any crews that were  
4 offered to us.

5 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Thank you.  
6 Also the critical customer list, I had several  
7 calls, and I'm sure everybody did, I'm  
8 thinking of one phone call from a woman who is  
9 86 years old. She came to my office. She had  
10 lost Optimum service and she was without her  
11 phone and also was unable to activate the  
12 emergency button around her neck. She is a  
13 woman who is capable of getting around. She  
14 was 86 years old and lived alone. She had  
15 certain issues she was concerned about.

16 I am curious, my first question,  
17 about that critical customer list. How does  
18 someone get on that? Are there certain health  
19 guidelines that are followed? Couple of other  
20 questions. But if you could tell me that that  
21 would be great.

22 MR. EICHHORN: It's a life  
23 support equipment list. Customers that are on  
24 that list typically have a doctor  
25 certification that they need to have certain

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2 medical equipment for life sustaining. They  
3 submit the form to us. We go through a review  
4 process. We approve and put them on the  
5 list.

6 I think your question and a lot of  
7 the questions we received in the storm is,  
8 does that give customers priority? And we do  
9 a lot of outreach for those customers. We let  
10 them know ahead of time that a storm is coming  
11 so they can plan. In a big storm like we  
12 experienced those customers they're identified  
13 and if we get to a point in the storm where we  
14 are restoring all single customer housing we  
15 would give priority to a customer who is on  
16 life support equipment over a customer who's  
17 not.

18 But we have an overall priority  
19 that we manage to in a storm. So a hospital  
20 and the critical customers that we talked  
21 about earlier is what we're focused on. So  
22 we're focused on stabilizing the system,  
23 transmission lines. Those customers that are  
24 on our critical customer list will get  
25 priority but they will get priority when we

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2 are at that level of restoration.

3 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: I would like  
4 to see it extended. I know for a fact that my  
5 mother when she had one of those around her  
6 neck she actually fell in the garage and she  
7 was able to activate it. If she hadn't been I  
8 don't know what would have happened. In  
9 instances like that, someone who is fairly  
10 capable but someone who is old, someone who is  
11 by themselves, someone who for whatever  
12 reasons they have concerns and of course  
13 they're going to be much more fearful in any  
14 kind of situation like that. I would love to  
15 see that extended to not just people who are  
16 in critical care. People who are at risk is  
17 basically what I'm talking about. Not just  
18 older people but people who could be at risk  
19 in a different way. However the guidelines I  
20 think would be looked at again. Maybe  
21 redefined. I think that would be tremendous  
22 help to the many people that were affected.

23 MR. EICHHORN: Understood.

24 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Also, I was  
25 wondering the inability of people to get

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2    through. Communications of course was an  
3    issue. Is it PSEG's policy that people should  
4    call 911 or -- it seemed like there was a  
5    tremendous amount of people that reached out  
6    to 911 which of course then could cause issues  
7    with other life-threatening occurrences that  
8    are happening elsewhere. I was just curious  
9    what PSEG's policy was about that.

10           MR. EICHHORN:     Our recommendation  
11   if a customer saw a downed power line,  
12   especially something that was sparking, we  
13   want them to call us. And we also encourage  
14   them to call 911. But if a customer just lost  
15   power and there's no evidence of a wire down  
16   and sparking we do not direct them to call  
17   911.

18           LEGISLATOR KENNEDY:     Also for the  
19   critical customer list, which of course I  
20   would prefer to see expanded, I think it would  
21   be better if that were a specific number, a  
22   specific line that was for those people who  
23   are on that list. Is that something that you  
24   think could be implemented?

25           MR. EICHHORN:     We can take a look

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2 at that as part of our after-action review.

3 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: One other  
4 question. I know when repairing an area  
5 that's down, do you have to shut off a grid in  
6 order to go in?

7 MR. EICHHORN: Sometimes we will  
8 take a circuit out for safety. It all depends  
9 on the circumstances. What work needs to be  
10 done. Sometimes there's two circuits on the  
11 pole line and one needs to come out for our  
12 workers to work safely on the other one.

13 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: So I was  
14 just wondering if it would be possible, like  
15 it was said before, that someone lost power  
16 and then a couple of days later they lost it  
17 again for several hours, if that kind of thing  
18 did happen would it be possible to notify  
19 people who are going to be losing their power,  
20 say you are going to be losing your power for  
21 a few hours at this time? So people are not  
22 alarmed and not concerned. Who are not then  
23 calling. So if you know certain area, a  
24 certain grid map area will be going down for a  
25 certain amount of time those people could be

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2 informed so they can prepare and everything  
3 would go smoothly.

4 MR. EICHHORN: Right. We can  
5 take a look at that as well.

6 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Great.  
7 Thank you. That's it for now.

8 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator  
9 Lafazan.

10 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Thank you  
11 Madam Chair and thank you for coming to  
12 testify today. I just want to draw a  
13 distinction. The ire from this committee is  
14 not directed at the thousands of workers, many  
15 of whom are not from Long Island, who went out  
16 in dangerous conditions. Quite frankly, the  
17 ire from this committee is directed at the  
18 management of the utility and that's an  
19 important distinction.

20 Before I'm a legislator I'm a son  
21 and family member. My home in Woodbury didn't  
22 have power restored for almost seven days. I  
23 slept in my car for several nights. So with  
24 due respect, before we're legislators we're  
25 also customers and I'm not a satisfied

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2 customer with all due respect.

3 First I want to talk about  
4 seniors. Woodbury Gardens is in my district.  
5 We had hundreds of seniors in perilous  
6 conditions. We had seniors trapped upstairs  
7 as they couldn't use electronic lifts. We had  
8 seniors whose medication spoiled. We had  
9 seniors who lacked anything but a land line.  
10 My office staff called PSE&G. Seniors called  
11 PSE&G. I called PSE&G. Nothing seemed to  
12 happen until the media truck showed up on  
13 Saturday.

14 So my question here is, what do you  
15 say to seniors living in these communities and  
16 will restoration be prioritized in these  
17 communities going forward?

18 MR. EICHHORN: Yeah. Any time we  
19 have an escalated job of that nature we do  
20 have an escalations process. In this storm  
21 there was a tremendous number of jobs being  
22 escalated. But we do try to get our people  
23 out there as soon as possible. So we do take  
24 that input. It's part of the reason why we  
25 have the robust external affairs group. We

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2       supplement that with about 30 municipal  
3       liaisons. And our intent there is to really  
4       get feedback on specific circumstances like  
5       that so we can escalate them. I'd have to  
6       look into that particular one to really know  
7       the details behind it.

8           LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN:       My ask is to  
9       please look into this specific case at  
10      Woodbury Gardens. Tuesday the storm hits.  
11      Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday we're  
12      told no action. No trucks. Nothing.  
13      Saturday a cadre of media pulls into Woodbury  
14      Gardens and all of a sudden within a few hours  
15      power is restored. So the seniors are looking  
16      at me and saying does PSE&G have to be shamed  
17      into taking care of our most vulnerable.

18                So I ask you to please look into  
19      the Woodbury Gardens because the escalation  
20      from Tuesday to Saturday is pretty concerning  
21      for seniors and I hope this takes action next  
22      time.

23                I next want to talk about  
24      preparedness. You had stated that 1600 line  
25      workers were here. What time on Tuesday were

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2 those 1600 line workers physically here and  
3 checked into their rooms on Long Island? What  
4 time on Tuesday?

5 MR. EICHHORN: I would have to  
6 get that information. They arrived at various  
7 times. It was multiple companies. They were  
8 coming from multiple states. Some as far away  
9 as Florida. Throughout the day we have a  
10 process where we check them in, we give them  
11 material, we give them safety review, we set  
12 them up in hotels. It was throughout the day  
13 they started to arrive.

14 I believe it was 1600 we had  
15 commitments on and roughly about 1300 were  
16 here on Tuesday.

17 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Sure. The  
18 reason I would like to know and if you could  
19 get back to me, if we knew the storm was  
20 coming why wouldn't they be here on Monday  
21 night checked into their rooms? I understand  
22 logistically to coordinate that type of  
23 response is difficult. Perhaps that will be  
24 looked at in the report that you guys do.  
25 Because if we knew a storm of this magnitude

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2       was coming and perhaps for the next one they  
3       would all be checked in Monday night. So  
4       instead of coming in Tuesday and then being  
5       dispatched, they could be checked in Monday  
6       night and be dispatched Tuesday after the  
7       storm.

8           I know I went outside 5:30, six  
9       o'clock. It was nice in Woodbury. Perhaps  
10      they could have been dispatched then and had  
11      all of Tuesday evening to work for these  
12      crews. I would like to see that in the  
13      report.

14           I want to talk about expedited  
15      response for vulnerable customers. Legislator  
16      Rose, Kennedy and Mule brought this up but I  
17      want to talk about vulnerable customers. From  
18      the thousands of calls our office took what  
19      concerns me most are the stories that someone  
20      finds themselves in a vulnerable state.  
21      They're on a medical device that needs power.  
22      They just had surgery, et cetera. They are  
23      not on the critical customer list. They are  
24      told by a PSE&G rep that, this is a quote,  
25      they need to get a doctor's note to update

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2 their file to get placed on the list otherwise  
3 it can't be changed.

4 I understand there's a protocol in  
5 place to get on this list before a storm. But  
6 emergencies happen. And with COVID, health  
7 situations are more fluid than ever. My  
8 question is, do you find this as a reasonable  
9 protocol in the 21st century and in the age of  
10 COVID?

11 MR. EICHHORN: We will definitely  
12 be -- we received a lot of feedback on our  
13 critical customer care program. We hear the  
14 concerns. We will definitely be looking at  
15 that as part of our after-action review.

16 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Just from a  
17 place of empathy, somebody loses their job or  
18 somebody is in a financially difficult  
19 position the last thing on their mind is am I  
20 on the critical customer discuss list for  
21 PSE&G. It's the last thing on their mind.

22 And then health situations happen  
23 so they call my office and say Josh, I  
24 literally had surgery yesterday. Or Josh, my  
25 father is on life support or oxygen and

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2 they're not on the list. I, as the  
3 legislator, can't certify them. I would sign  
4 anything. If you want legislators to certify  
5 that these situations are accurate we'll do  
6 it. But there has to be a change because life  
7 happens. The last thing on our constituents'  
8 minds is are they on this list. So I  
9 definitely would like to see that on the  
10 report.

11 I want to talk about emergency  
12 response systems. What is PSE&G's plan to  
13 coordinate with Verizon and with local  
14 emergency response systems, including the 911  
15 system, to ensure that outages have the least  
16 impact on those systems?

17 MR. EICHHORN: We will have to  
18 take a look at that. We do coordinate with  
19 Verizon and cable companies when there is pole  
20 work that needs to be done. The communication  
21 systems I would have to get back to you on  
22 that.

23 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: I want to  
24 talk about generators next. How many  
25 generators does PSE&G have on hand?

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2 MR. EICHHORN: I don't have that  
3 number.

4 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: If you can  
5 get back to us. And the other question is,  
6 are those generators -- you don't have a  
7 number -- are those generators maintained and  
8 placed at the ready in prestorm preparation?  
9 And additionally, can you look to purchase  
10 portable generators with FEMA funds for use in  
11 emergencies going forward?

12 MR. EICHHORN: I'll have to get  
13 back to you on that.

14 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: I think  
15 those are important questions.

16 I want to talk about cell towers.  
17 It's often inconvenient to lose power but it  
18 can be exceptionally dangerous to not have  
19 cell service in case of an emergency. So  
20 thousands of my constituents couldn't make  
21 phone calls from their homes because their  
22 local cell towers died and had no power. They  
23 literally walk across town to find free WiFi  
24 from a Dunkin Donuts to message me on  
25 Instagram. That is not crisis management.

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2 So, would you be open to working with the  
3 telecom companies to install some generators  
4 by some cell towers?

5 MR. EICHHORN: We are willing to  
6 work with anybody. We want to make sure that  
7 the infrastructure of Long Island is restored  
8 as soon as possible. I think it's more of a  
9 question for some of the phone companies. I  
10 do believe that they are supposed to and  
11 required to have backup generation for their  
12 towers.

13 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Because it  
14 seems when it comes to -- I appreciate your  
15 magnanimity in coming here. It seems that  
16 there's finger pointing. The telecom  
17 companies to PSE&G, the PSE&G to the telecom  
18 companies. All the while the conversation  
19 doesn't happen. So perhaps my office will  
20 make outreach to local reps from PSE&G and the  
21 telecom companies to have that conversation.  
22 Because having somebody trapped in their home  
23 and not being able to make calls whether it's  
24 for a health situation or to a loved one is  
25 unacceptable. I will be happy to take the

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2 lead on that and I look forward to contacting  
3 your office to move that forward.

4 I want to talk about geographic  
5 response. My district is northeast Nassau  
6 County, Syosset, Woodbury, west to Roslyn,  
7 north to Bayville everything in between. As I  
8 said, I lost power for almost seven days in my  
9 home. I understand that resources are  
10 concentrated in certain areas for efficiency.  
11 It seems that there wasn't a single truck on  
12 the north shore for all of Wednesday and all  
13 of Thursday. So can you speak about  
14 geographic response in Nassau County and where  
15 resources were concentrated?

16 MR. EICHHORN: Our restoration  
17 process, and I mentioned this, at the high  
18 level is to stabilize the backbones of the  
19 system. Once we have that completed, we  
20 essentially prioritize our work based on the  
21 number of customers out per problem. If we  
22 have a thousand customer outage that would be  
23 our priority. We want to get our crews  
24 working to restore the most amount of  
25 customers in the beginning of the storm. And

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2 we essentially work our way down from there.  
3 Some areas where you didn't see trucks were  
4 areas where the customer account was likely  
5 lower and it took us that long to get to that  
6 level of the jobs.

7 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Lastly, I  
8 appreciate the time madam chair, many of my  
9 colleagues have asked the same question but  
10 this seems to be the question that we're  
11 asking and we're not getting the answer we  
12 want. Again, we appreciate the magnanimity,  
13 the take accountability and to come here and  
14 answer questions. But these words are hollow  
15 without specific on-the-record assurances. So  
16 what specific on-the-record assurances can you  
17 give my colleagues and I that what transpired,  
18 the communication blunders, the delayed  
19 responses, the errors, I understand there will  
20 be a comprehensive report and I look forward  
21 to delve into that report, but what assurances  
22 can you give us today on the record that what  
23 happen won't happen again? Other than we're  
24 going to look at it, what assurances are we  
25 going to get?

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2 MR. EICHHORN: The assurance I  
3 can give you is that we admit we were not  
4 happy with our communication. We're not happy  
5 with the impact it had on customers and your  
6 constituents. It's not the level of service  
7 we expect to provide and we're going to fix  
8 it. We're going to do the after-action  
9 review. We're going to make sure that things  
10 are improved. So there's no hiding from the  
11 issues. We take full responsibility for what  
12 occurred. It wasn't what we expected to have  
13 happened. I think we've performed well in  
14 other storms and we really got to get to the  
15 root cause of what happened here and make  
16 those improvements. There's no denying it.  
17 The restoration and the communications was  
18 unacceptable.

19 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Thank you  
20 and I appreciate that. I studied crisis  
21 response at Harvard. There's a two steps and  
22 you've done the first which is to take  
23 accountability. I appreciate that. The  
24 second step is action. I ask in that report  
25 that we have specific action items and

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2 assurances and look forward to reading that  
3 report. Thank you Madam Chair.

4 LEGISLATOR FORD: You've heard  
5 from all of us and soon we will open up.  
6 There might be some people in the public that  
7 may have questions and then hopefully we will  
8 be finished with you.

9 I guess just to summarize and  
10 looking at some the other comments that some  
11 of the other legislators gave in regard to I  
12 guess the response and when people were given  
13 false hope to the fact that they were going to  
14 be turned on after a certain amount of time  
15 and they weren't. I think that the loss of  
16 credibility that people had to PSE&G is very  
17 paramount because of that. I guess sometimes  
18 people don't understand, as you explained,  
19 that you may have a crew go out to assess what  
20 the damage is so that you can make a better  
21 determination as to which crew will follow  
22 through.

23 But then also then I guess  
24 Legislator DeRiggi-Whitton had brought up  
25 about the out-of-state workers and that some

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2       of them were like sitting, maybe waiting to go  
3       someplace. I would hope that in the future  
4       that you would then set up maybe like a grid  
5       so that you would have -- that they would work  
6       with the local people. That they would be  
7       teamed up with crews that are already here.  
8       But I guess we only have 200 or 500 linemen.  
9       So that maybe you can utilize your management  
10      so that they will then be in charge of a crew  
11      and they will be out in the field with them  
12      directing them to the proper neighborhoods  
13      knowing where they have to go.

14                   I guess if you come from Florida  
15      some of the streets in the Long Island,  
16      especially the north shore, are very windy and  
17      end up in dead ends and whatever. So there  
18      could be a lot of confusion and delay in the  
19      restoration of service.

20                   I think that when we talked about  
21      even with the billing, that we hope that we  
22      take a look at the billing as well for people  
23      who are on balanced billing that they lost  
24      service for so many days. And once again even  
25      with the food and whatever type of assistance

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2 that you may be able to provide to the  
3 residents that were hard hit.

4 The stress on our most vulnerable  
5 population. In the old days despite power  
6 outages the phones used to work. The phone  
7 company had battery backup. The plain old  
8 telephone service. People were still able to  
9 communicate. I guess now with the changes in  
10 the type of services that we're getting from  
11 both Optimum and Verizon it is now power.  
12 That if we lose power we're going to lose  
13 service. I think that's something that we  
14 need to have a dialogue with these companies  
15 to find out how do we maintain it? How is it  
16 that if somebody has a phone in their house,  
17 not so much whether or not they have -- I  
18 still have a land line, but it goes out when  
19 Fios is not working. I think that that's  
20 something that needs to be discussed amongst  
21 all the communications. Because if we have  
22 residents that, like Legislator Kennedy said,  
23 his mother fell in the garage, if we have  
24 somebody who can't reach you to let you know  
25 or if they can't reach the outside world that

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2    is something that is very, very critical and  
3    it has to have a priority.

4           I think communications, when we  
5    look now at all of this, communications is the  
6    most important aspect of what this response  
7    was during the storm. After the storm.

8           So we look forward to your action  
9    plan, and I'm hoping though that you  
10   communicate quite effectively with everybody  
11   so that hopefully, not to put a time frame,  
12   but that maybe within a couple of weeks we'll  
13   be able to have some idea of what your  
14   responses would be in regard to this action  
15   plan. Because we are getting very close to  
16   September. Let's pray to God we don't have  
17   anything -- I think Irene came on August  
18   28th. We know that there could be storms  
19   brewing right now.

20           But I would hope that we would try  
21   to work faster on coming up with a plan so  
22   that we know moving forward we can hope to  
23   minimize the outages for our residents and  
24   especially for our most vulnerable.

25           But I thank you very much for

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2 showing up. You came here to speak with us  
3 and address our questions and our concerns and  
4 we will be going after our communications  
5 companies as well because I think that they  
6 also need to answer to the public as well as  
7 to what happened and where was the breakdown.  
8 Especially with their cell towers.

9 While it's nice to have you go to  
10 restore the power as fast as you can, it  
11 really is, in my estimation, it is their  
12 responsibility to make sure that they have  
13 battery backup and they have enough storage so  
14 that people do not lose their cell phone  
15 service. That is something we all share  
16 responsibility and we have to make sure  
17 everybody lives up to what they are  
18 responsible for.

19 At this time I don't know if there  
20 is anyone in the public. Anyone in the  
21 public? Yes ma'am. Would you like to come up  
22 and state your name and address.

23 MS. PAULIS: Good afternoon  
24 legislator and legislators. My name is Dr.  
25 Cynthia Paulis. I live in Massapequa Park.

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2 I'm a long-term resident. I grew up there. I  
3 was six years old when I moved there from  
4 Merrick. I'm also a military physician  
5 retired. We learned about drills. We learned  
6 about preparation. I lived in Oklahoma. I  
7 lived in Texas. I lived through tornados. I  
8 lived through earthquakes in Japan. I lived  
9 through tornados in Texas. We never lost  
10 power. We had multiple power companies. We  
11 had powers -- power was always underground.

12 I would like to share with you my  
13 experience with your company so you understand  
14 what I went through. And I'm just a fraction  
15 of what some of the people have gone through  
16 and some of the legislators have articulated  
17 it so well.

18 It was 1:20 in the afternoon on  
19 Tuesday. I was in my house and I heard an  
20 explosion and all of a sudden power went out.  
21 I said okay. We knew a storm was coming. But  
22 I had faith because you had informed me the  
23 day before and said we have this app and if  
24 you lose power you contact this app. So I  
25 said great. I put it on my phone. I was

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2 ready. I had faith in you. I had confidence  
3 in you because I lost power for two and a half  
4 weeks during Superstorm Sandy. It was  
5 freezing cold. But I said this is the  
6 summer. That's okay. I had faith in you.  
7 Which failed.

8 So what happened is that my  
9 neighbor started texting me and I looked and I  
10 said what's going on? He said you have a live  
11 wire on your roof that's sparking. I had just  
12 put a new roof on a few years ago. I said oh  
13 my God, we're going to have a fire. I ran out  
14 and I saw this wire. It was sparking. It  
15 went down the street. Immediately I started  
16 contacting you. I couldn't get through by  
17 phone. I tried texting you. That failed. I  
18 called 911. I got a busy signal. I called  
19 again and again. I called my neighbor. I  
20 said Mark, keep trying to get through, I'm  
21 trying to get the police.

22 I called the Seventh Precinct. I  
23 told them where I was. I said look, this is  
24 an emergency. There's a live wire in the  
25 street. As I said, I'm a ER physician and I'm

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2 concerned about people's safety. What  
3 happened is that the wires started bouncing  
4 around because the wind started picking up.  
5 This is the beginning of the storm.

6 Then the Seventh Precinct said  
7 okay. I just wanted someone to cordon this  
8 off so that nobody would get injured. They  
9 never showed.

10 I called the fire department. The  
11 fire department went sailing by my house. I  
12 think there was another disaster down the  
13 road. They didn't stop. Again I kept  
14 trying. Again and again and again. And  
15 fortunately, by the grace of God, this power  
16 wire then eventually just went by the curb.  
17 At that point the wind started picking up.  
18 Branches started going. A chair literally, a  
19 lawn chair, went by me. I said okay, I better  
20 get in for my own safety. I said okay, it's  
21 by the curb. We're just going to have to hope  
22 by the grace of God it stays there.

23 I kept trying your company again  
24 and again and again. Couldn't get through.  
25 It kept saying the number's not working. I

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2 tried the app again and again. And this went  
3 on and on and on. I said okay, you know  
4 what? It's going to work out. Power will be  
5 restored.

6 The next day, the next day, the  
7 next day. And like Legislator Lafazan, I  
8 slept in my car. That was fine. It had a  
9 sunroof. I was able to plug in. I was able  
10 to get my phone. I still kept trying to get a  
11 hold of you.

12 I actually drove down to your  
13 company in Seaford on Merrick Road. I said  
14 surely there will be people there. Because we  
15 have a lot of seniors in our community. We  
16 have a lot of veterans and we have a lot of  
17 people that are disabled. I was in a  
18 wheelchair for two years before I got  
19 reconstructed. Through good surgeons who  
20 basically have helped me. And I live by  
21 myself.

22 I have been one of those people  
23 that you talked about here such as Legislator  
24 Kennedy, who represents our district. We have  
25 so many people that rely on you.

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2 You said we've got 1500 people, we  
3 have 2,000 people. I have something on my  
4 phone right now that talks about 4,000  
5 workers. I'm like wow, this is great. Where  
6 are they? You said they were on the north  
7 shore. They weren't on the south shore.  
8 Nobody saw a truck. We all kept saying where  
9 are these people?

10 We understand there are problems.  
11 But my wire wasn't brought down by a tree or a  
12 limb because I've been through that already.  
13 I already had a tree go through my house. It  
14 went through my neighbors over the past  
15 years. I really don't have anything that's  
16 affecting that. But there were trees, not the  
17 branches and I must say your company has done  
18 a wonderful job trimming the trees and taking  
19 care of the wires. The problem was these  
20 trees they've been there since I was a child,  
21 I'm 68 years old, they flipped and brought the  
22 sidewalk up with them. That was a problem.

23 But the thing is nobody saw  
24 anybody. It seemed there was no action. To  
25 answer your question because you didn't seem

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2 to have the answers which was very troubling  
3 to me to listen to this saying we'll get back  
4 to you, we'll get back to you.

5 Madam legislator, you talked about  
6 the poles. I have photos on my phone if you  
7 would like to see. The poles they weren't  
8 disturbed by the trees. They're literally  
9 right angled. They snapped. And that was on  
10 the south shore where trees were cut down.  
11 There was nothing there but the pole snapped.  
12 These are antiquated poles that have been  
13 there since I was a kid. They do need to be  
14 replaced. It's great to do the trimming of  
15 trees and the wires but you got to replace the  
16 pole. You got to be proactive.

17 This gentleman here, I can't see  
18 your name, you had some wonderful points that  
19 you brought up. I never heard about that  
20 list. We have so many vulnerable people on  
21 Long Island. They love Long Island. They  
22 stay on Long Island. You're a monopoly and  
23 that's a problem. You're the only game in  
24 town. If we have competition, and I  
25 understand Freeport and Rockville Centre have

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2 their own power companies and they said they  
3 never lose power, my recommendation to this  
4 legislators is that we need to decentralize.  
5 This way you're just going to take care of  
6 Massapequa Park or the Massapequas if they  
7 lose power. So you have people that are  
8 concentrating in that area.

9 I'm disturbed to hear that you  
10 don't have generators and that you don't know  
11 the amount of generators this is troublesome.

12 LEGISLATOR FORD: Doctor I hate  
13 to but can you wrap it up soon?

14 MS. PAULIS: What I'm saying is  
15 preparedness. Did you have power? I'm just  
16 kind of curious just for own edification, did  
17 you have power where you lived?

18 MR. EICHHORN: I did, yes.

19 MS. PAULIS: But you had so many  
20 of these seniors who couldn't get into lifts.  
21 I have a lift in my basement because I can't  
22 do stairs. Stairs are very difficult for me  
23 to do. We need to take care of our community  
24 and that means preparedness. And I would like  
25 to see your commitment that you're going to

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2       come back to this legislature and say okay,  
3       this is what we're going to do now to fix  
4       these problems. I think you, as the head of  
5       the company, should go out to the communities  
6       and talk and have town hall meetings and speak  
7       to the people.

8           I have friends around Huntington 11  
9       days. And your company -- the tree fell down  
10      into their backyard and a wire -- and it  
11      electrified the backyard. They were told not  
12      to go in there. The fire department came  
13      because there were two fires. Your company  
14      came and literally dragged the tree into their  
15      yard and left it there. This is an 85 foot  
16      tree. These people are 80 years old. They  
17      said well, it's their responsibility to take  
18      it out. It wasn't their tree. It was the  
19      next door neighbor's tree that was dragged  
20      down and they sent me a video of the power men  
21      bringing these trees down from an outside  
22      company. They want to know what to do. I  
23      said contact your legislator. Contact the  
24      insurance company. I think the legislator is  
25      the first way to go.

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2 But these are some of the things  
3 you need come out to our community and listen  
4 to. There are only 20 people that were  
5 allowed in here but there are a lot of angry  
6 people in the community. I want to see you  
7 succeed and we want to see you work with our  
8 community. Thank you.

9 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thanks for  
10 coming down. Do we have any other speakers?  
11 Yes sir.

12 MR. MCKENNA: My name is Kevin  
13 McKenna. I am a Syosett resident and also the  
14 founder of Town of Oyster Bay News on  
15 Facebook. I appreciate the gentleman on the  
16 right having the courtesy to turn around and  
17 look at the prior resident speak. It's very  
18 nice.

19 The point I want to make that is we  
20 all realize that this storm was a terrible  
21 storm. I happen to drive all over Long Island  
22 during the day of the storm. You guys were  
23 dealt a major, major blow with the amount of  
24 trees that have come down. I drive Uber and I  
25 saw every hamlet, especially in the Town of

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2 Oyster Bay if not Nassau County. But what I  
3 want to get to is the communications.

4 With the technology today that's  
5 available, having spent 25 years in the  
6 technology field, do you even need customers  
7 to call you and tell you that there is a power  
8 outage?

9 MR. EICHHORN: We have multiple  
10 systems to identify when customers are out.  
11 An individual customer if they don't have a  
12 smart meter we do need them to call us. But  
13 anything that's a transmission line, a  
14 substation, a major circuit on a road we have  
15 a system that sends us an alert when the  
16 circuits trip out. Be equivalent if you  
17 tripped a breaker in your house, an alarm went  
18 off in your kitchen, we have that system. The  
19 big problems we know about. The smaller  
20 individual customers we do rely on them right  
21 now to call us and notify us that they lost  
22 power.

23 MR. MCKENNA: So is it an  
24 advantage for all these customers to call you  
25 and crash your system? Is that an advantage?

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2 Do you need them to call you?

3 MR. EICHHORN: We need the  
4 individual customers to call us. In the  
5 beginning of this storm we knew most of the  
6 major damage just from our other systems that  
7 we had reporting. So customers at that time  
8 did not necessarily need to call us.

9 MR. MCKENNA: My point is, I  
10 compliment a lot of the legislators that had  
11 to play customer service rep. But what I  
12 don't understand, this is directed at Nassau  
13 County, Nassau County has an Office of  
14 Emergency Management and I went on the Office  
15 of Emergency Management website and I cannot  
16 understand what the purpose of the Office of  
17 Emergency Management is.

18 And my question to you gentlemen  
19 is, what support, what coordination, what  
20 preparation did you make with the Office of  
21 Emergency Management and the Town of Oyster  
22 Bay and the Town of Hempstead, who has public  
23 safety departments. I did not see, with all  
24 the traffic lights that were down, I didn't  
25 police departments at traffic lights. The

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2 Town of Oyster Bay spends almost \$2 million a  
3 year on a public safety department. The Town  
4 of Hempstead's probably larger than that. Did  
5 you prepare with those three entities that I  
6 just mentioned? Beforehand did you sit down  
7 with them and coordinate what assistance they  
8 were going to provide you in the event of a  
9 catastrophe?

10 MR. EICHHORN: Yes. We have  
11 multiple levels that we prepare. We place  
12 individuals in the county EOCs. We do the  
13 same for New York City in the Rockaways.

14 MR. MCKENNA: Sorry to interrupt  
15 you. Could you be specific about what the  
16 Office of Emergency Management of Nassau  
17 County --

18 LEGISLATOR FORD: Mr. McKenna  
19 redirect over to here.

20 MR. MCKENNA: Ms. Ford, could you  
21 explain to us what the purpose of Emergency  
22 Management is and how they assisted these  
23 gentlemen? Could you explain that?

24 LEGISLATOR FORD: We are going to  
25 have the commissioner of Office of Emergency

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2 Management speak after this. So you can  
3 direct that question to him. We will have a  
4 representative from the Nassau County Police  
5 Department as well as our DPW. So those  
6 questions that would pertain to the county's  
7 response and coordination in all fairness --

8 MR. MCKENNA: When will that take  
9 place?

10 LEGISLATOR FORD: Right after.

11 MR. MCKENNA: Fortunately for you  
12 I will be gone.

13 LEGISLATOR FORD: If you want to  
14 wait.

15 MR. MCKENNA: I can't. I have to  
16 be somewhere. Lastly, I will just close up.  
17 I'll end it right now. As I pulled into the  
18 parking lot here, directly across the street,  
19 on a side street across the street, when you  
20 leave walk across the street and look at five  
21 trees that are Nassau County trees that are on  
22 top of your power lines across the street.  
23 And I'd like to know at some point in time,  
24 and I'm sure all the residents would, what is  
25 Nassau County and the Town of Oyster Bay and

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2 the Town of Hempstead doing to help you?

3 Thank you very much.

4 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very  
5 much. We have just one last speaker. Mayor  
6 Spinoso.

7 MS. SPINOSA: Thank you Madam  
8 Chairman and thank you to the members of the  
9 legislature. My name is Teresa Spinoso. I'm  
10 the mayor of the Village of Massapequa Park.  
11 Representing over 10,000 residents.

12 First, I want to thank Legislator  
13 Kennedy, he's our representative, for all the  
14 work he did and the assistance he gave us  
15 during the storm Isaias. As was mentioned  
16 before, we have elderly residents. Over 30  
17 percent of our population are elderly people.  
18 During the storm it was very difficult. We  
19 had Whitewood Landing that was out without  
20 power for several days. Thanks to the  
21 intervention of representative Kennedy and Kim  
22 Kaiman, who became our best friend throughout  
23 that whole period, we were able to get the  
24 power restored but it did take two days. Some  
25 of those residents are over 80, 90 years old

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2 and it's very difficult for them and scary for  
3 them to be alone and to be in the dark for  
4 that amount of time.

5 The one frustration as a village  
6 official was that the municipal hotline  
7 basically was not in effect the entire week.  
8 Was just a busy signal the whole week. I  
9 understood that there was a complete crash of  
10 the communication system.

11 Going forward, I think that all the  
12 villages and towns should have one liaison  
13 that's dedicated to them that can say mayor, I  
14 have some good news and some bad news. This  
15 Smith Street is going to be without power for  
16 several days because of the downed trees.  
17 Yes, we had extensive damage to our village.  
18 Bordering the South Shore we're used to  
19 storms. We lived through Sandy. Extreme  
20 damage. Thankfully we didn't get the rain  
21 that Sandy gave us so we didn't have the  
22 flooding, which would have made the tree  
23 situation much worse. We would have lost many  
24 more trees. We had a lot of downed trees that  
25 just pulled the power lines down and blocked

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2 many of the streets.

3 We have a lot of first responders  
4 as well in our village, so it was very  
5 difficult for those folks to get out and get  
6 to work.

7 But going forward I would just  
8 welcome all the ideas that were presented  
9 today and wish you luck. I really hope that  
10 you hear all of our concerns and address them  
11 and we want to work with you as a village and  
12 as a community to improve whatever we can.  
13 Thank you very much.

14 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you  
15 ma'am. One last question. Legislator Rhoads  
16 one question, right?

17 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Just one last  
18 question. Obviously in your opening statement  
19 you said as a legislature we're entitled to  
20 answers. I know that many of the questions  
21 that we asked you could not answer because you  
22 have to conduct your after-action review,  
23 which is certainly understandable. In terms  
24 of a time frame, do we think that that  
25 after-action review, given the fact that we

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2 are in the middle of hurricane season right  
3 now and that we could have a storm at any  
4 point in time, is that after-action review  
5 going to be done next week?

6 MR. EICHHORN: I can't give you  
7 an exact date. I can tell you what we will do  
8 as we identify the root causes and the fixes  
9 we'll implement those immediately and we can  
10 keep you up to date as to what we find as  
11 opposed to making you wait months for a  
12 report.

13 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: What I would  
14 like to do is I'd love to, with the permission  
15 of the chairwoman, I would love to have you  
16 back once you've completed that after-action  
17 review or substantially completed that  
18 after-action review so we can get answers to  
19 some of those questions. Some of which  
20 weren't even asked just because of time and  
21 I'm assuming that we can still submit  
22 questions to you either via email or however.

23 What would be a good time for frame  
24 for that to take place? Can we have you back  
25 in three weeks? Can we have you back in a

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2 month? When do you think you're going to have  
3 a lot of those answers?

4 MR. EICHHORN: We are more than  
5 willing to come back and talk to the  
6 committee. What I would just ask is let us go  
7 back and get a feel for when would be the most  
8 available time to come back so we do have  
9 answers for you and substance and not coming  
10 back saying that we're just continuing with an  
11 after-action review.

12 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I appreciate  
13 that but we know it's not going to be six  
14 months from now, right?

15 MR. EICHHORN: No.

16 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: We think  
17 within a month?

18 MR. EICHHORN: Like I said, it's  
19 tough for me to say. A month doesn't sound  
20 unreasonable but let me go back and we can get  
21 you a date.

22 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Because our  
23 concern is, look, we've all got residents that  
24 we represent. Between all of us we represent,  
25 the 19 of us, all of the residents, 1.4

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2   million residents of Nassau County, we could  
3   have a problem next week and there are issues  
4   that need to be addressed, that need to be  
5   addressed quickly and we just can't have it  
6   sit out there for any indefinite period of  
7   time. So we take your suggestion in good  
8   faith but we would hope that sooner rather  
9   than later we can have you back here and get  
10   answers to some of those questions and see  
11   what the plan is after you have been able to  
12   complete your after-action review.

13                   MR. EICHHORN:       Understood.

14                   LEGISLATOR RHOADS:     Thank you Mr.  
15   Eichhorn.

16                   LEGISLATOR FORD:     Thank you very  
17   much for joining us. I just want to put a  
18   note on the record that town of North  
19   Hempstead Supervisor Judi Bosworth did send a  
20   letter to us echoing a lot of the questions  
21   and concerns that many of the legislators  
22   had. I just want to let everyone know that  
23   she did reach out and I'm sure she probably  
24   reached out to you as well.

25                   And then we did receive a lot of

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2 emails from representatives part of the  
3 Hamilton Park Civic Association as well as  
4 others.

5 But I thank you. We will be  
6 following up on this action report and in the  
7 mean time we will be in touch with your  
8 liaisons that interact with us. They have  
9 been helpful in the past. I look forward to  
10 making sure that we keep in touch with them  
11 following along to find any updates as to any  
12 improvements that you may be putting in right  
13 away would be very good for us to know.

14 But I thank you very much gentlemen  
15 for joining us and answering our questions as  
16 best as you can and let's just pray that we  
17 don't have too many storms coming in the near  
18 future. Thank you very much. Stay healthy  
19 and stay safe.

20 MR. EICHHORN: Thank you.

21 LEGISLATOR FORD: In about three  
22 minutes we will have our representatives from  
23 OEM, Nassau County PD and DPW up here.

24 Good afternoon gentlemen. Thank  
25 you very much for attending today. I guess

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2 we're going to start with the Nassau County  
3 PD. From what I understand you don't have  
4 prepared statements and that you're just open  
5 to our questions, am I correct? Just identify  
6 yourself for the record.

7 MR. LEAHY: Inspector William  
8 Leahy. Currently assigned to the support  
9 division working with OEM.

10 LEGISLATOR FORD: I guess you  
11 heard the testimony. I'm sure that you were  
12 here with PSE&G and some of the questions and  
13 concerns that we had with PSE&G. And for me,  
14 I think that one thing that stands out in my  
15 mind is that I had received calls from --  
16 during the storm and after the storm with the  
17 number of downed trees that were blocking  
18 roadways.

19 I know that I reached out to my  
20 precinct in the hopes of trying to get  
21 officers out there to help direct traffic  
22 because they were major roadways and because  
23 of the enormity of the storm and damage that  
24 was done even the high level officers,  
25 superior officers, out in the streets

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2 directing traffic and we seemed to have a lack  
3 of personnel to be able to go out and stand by  
4 these places.

5 So, I think, for me, when the storm  
6 was coming did we prepare to bring in any  
7 additional resources, if necessary, say in  
8 regard to the fact that maybe intersections  
9 didn't have power or trees may be blocking  
10 major roadways to maybe post officers there to  
11 direct traffic? Did we bring in any  
12 additional officers above and beyond what was  
13 on call?

14 MR. LEAHY: We follow our 120  
15 hour coastal storm plan which we began to  
16 evaluate on Friday as the storm came up and  
17 worked its way up to coast. We take some  
18 preemptive actions and then we look at our  
19 coastal storm plan. We were fully staffed for  
20 this event. We did see an increased volume of  
21 calls beginning on Tuesday night through  
22 Wednesday. That 48 period we had over 17,000  
23 calls with a peak on Tuesday at 2 o'clock of  
24 2,000 calls in an hour. A large majority of  
25 those storm-related calls. TSL, traffic

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2 lights out, wires and trees down including  
3 well checks. We do evaluate those.

4 We work with the officers to  
5 evaluate those. If we do need to bring in  
6 extra people we do shift and pull people out  
7 of nonpatrol functions at that point. So we  
8 will utilize extra officers that will go out  
9 and assist and evaluate those things. It's  
10 constant shift as those calls come in and  
11 prioritized we move personnel.

12 LEGISLATOR FORD: Did it generate  
13 like bringing any officers in on overtime in  
14 response to this or did you just work with  
15 what was on staff?

16 MR. LEAHY: That information I  
17 don't have in front of me but I can get back  
18 to you with that.

19 LEGISLATOR FORD: I appreciate  
20 it. I know this was an enormous event. As  
21 short lived as it was it really did a lot of  
22 damage.

23 We heard about I guess even with  
24 the 911 calls that people I guess were getting  
25 busy signals. What is the plan moving

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2 forward? To me, nothing is more aggravating  
3 and unsettling actually when somebody is  
4 trying to call 911. I know that you were  
5 overwhelmed because many people who could not  
6 get through to PSE&G were dialing 911 in order  
7 to report downed wires, maybe the trees or  
8 whatever. People had trees that went into  
9 their homes so the concern was there. But  
10 moving forward what is the plan?

11 Because we saw that even with PSE&G  
12 could not handle the influx of calls that they  
13 had. What about us? We have to have  
14 something so that the worst case scenario I  
15 would think we need to take a look at the  
16 response this past when it happened and how  
17 many calls you got and maybe to improve the  
18 system or build upon the system so they can do  
19 maybe 20 percent more than what you received  
20 at the high point. Any thoughts on that?

21 MR. LEAHY: Yes. We can  
22 certainly evaluate that. We will continue to  
23 evaluate after every storm we look at it after  
24 action. We see what we can do. We do have a  
25 plan for some surge but with this type of

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2 event and the catastrophic failure from the  
3 PSE&G lines that was something we hadn't  
4 experienced before. We do put them into the  
5 queue. We answer all the calls that we can  
6 eventually that are still there and we move  
7 forward and categorize those. We do answer  
8 the calls that we get.

9 LEGISLATOR FORD: Any other  
10 legislators? Do you want to go to all of  
11 them? They were just going to answer  
12 questions. Legislator Mule.

13 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you. If  
14 a person gets a busy signal on a 911 call are  
15 they supposed to hang up and dial again or you  
16 mentioned something about a queue. So I'm  
17 wondering are they supposed to stay online?  
18 How does that work?

19 MR. LEAHY: There's usually an  
20 automated line that tells them to hold on and  
21 it will put them into the queue.

22 LEGISLATOR MULE: It's not a busy  
23 signal per se? It's not the beep, beep,  
24 beep? You hear a message; is that correct?

25 MR. LEAHY: Yes.

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2 LEGISLATOR MULE: I'm going to  
3 ask you the question that I asked PSE&G. To  
4 your knowledge, did you ever have your system  
5 crash so that you weren't able to get any 911  
6 calls?

7 MR. LEAHY: I don't believe our  
8 system crashed. I can check and get back to  
9 you with that but I don't believe our system  
10 crashed. We didn't receive that information.

11 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you.

12 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator  
13 DeRiggi-Whitton.

14 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I  
15 want to thank you also. Coming off of COVID  
16 and this it's been a real test for everyone  
17 and I appreciate your efforts. We were  
18 concerned, as I mentioned before, Legislator  
19 Birnbaum and I especially, regarding traffic  
20 signals. I know DPW we have a list of where  
21 the lights are. Do we know if they're working  
22 or not for each light?

23 MR. SCHNEIDER: Brian Schneider,  
24 deputy county executive for parks and public  
25 works. My understanding is that every signal

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2 is back and functioning.

3 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: But  
4 during an emergency like this do we have the  
5 knowledge as to whether or not something is  
6 online or not?

7 MR. SCHNEIDER: Yes, we do. We  
8 have obviously our traffic management center  
9 located at 1194 Prospect Avenue in Westbury  
10 has direct continuity and communication with  
11 each of those signalized traffic devices. So  
12 we know when they go down.

13 And I'm just going to kind of  
14 contest what Mr. Eichhorn had mentioned that  
15 he was not aware or PSE&G was not aware of the  
16 devices that were down. We were made aware  
17 that their municipal portal went down in the  
18 early afternoon and at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday  
19 they contacted just about every municipality  
20 throughout Long Island to have a list of their  
21 most critical needs sent to them. By 8:30  
22 that evening we sent them our most critical  
23 needs which included every downed traffic  
24 signal location. So they were made aware of  
25 that and we were then dealing with PD and

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2 Office of OEM about getting at least generator  
3 power to the most critical locations as  
4 quickly as possible.

5 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: From  
6 what I understood from the phone call, they  
7 basically said there was no way of PSE&G to  
8 track where the traffic lights were and  
9 whether or not they were working correctly on  
10 the grid.

11 MR. SCHNEIDER: They had that  
12 information from DPW directly from numerous  
13 people in DPW. Not only the commissioner sent  
14 the list but we had our garage foreman  
15 reaching out to their contacts. Because  
16 basically once the municipal portal went down  
17 everyone was kind of scrambling around trying  
18 to get the information, the critical  
19 information to PSE&G as quickly as possible.

20 In many cases, just as many  
21 residents had, making multiple phone calls  
22 with no success. We finally did get through  
23 and gave them that critical list of locations  
24 where either signals were down or trees were  
25 blocking roadways. So they had that

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2 information at 8:30 on Tuesday evening.

3 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I

4 don't doubt it at all. I'm wondering if  
5 there's any way we could improve, I don't  
6 know, I've been trying to think if there was  
7 some type of legislation or something we could  
8 do to have PSE&G really respond to all of  
9 traffic lights. I know we have the  
10 hospitals. We have everything else. But  
11 maybe as a mom of two new drivers I couldn't  
12 believe that it was still out. It was over 48  
13 hours after the storm. It's Glen Cove Road  
14 and Northern Boulevard.

15 MR. SCHNEIDER: Correct. We did  
16 make an effort to get generators out to those  
17 critical locations. And I just have to put a  
18 caveat out there that it's not as simple as  
19 pulling a generator out the truck and setting  
20 it on the ground and starting it up. Making  
21 the physical connection to the traffic control  
22 box presents its own challenges. There are  
23 phasing issues. It's not simple plug and  
24 play. It's something that we rolled out for  
25 this storm really for the first time at I

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2 believe a dozen locations.

3 I did want to make note that  
4 post-Sandy recognizing that flood-prone areas  
5 along the south shore had particularly  
6 susceptible traffic issues with downed  
7 signals. We did get a grant from GOSR to  
8 install the type of connections that would  
9 make the ready connection of the generator  
10 much more possible. That contract is actually  
11 going to be coming in front of this body in  
12 the next month I would say where we're going  
13 to look at 122 specific locations all along  
14 the south shore, those flood-prone areas,  
15 where we can roll out generators with a very  
16 easy connection. Not manpower intensive. The  
17 only thing you have to do is gas up the  
18 generators. So that's going to be looked at.

19 Unfortunately, it's not going to be  
20 looked at island-wide but it's really the  
21 first step in protecting our infrastructure  
22 and the residents going forward.

23 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I  
24 think that's great. I was wondering if there  
25 was anything -- I think when I was a kid we

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2   used to have if the traffic lights went out  
3   there would be like a red light that would  
4   blink. Because Locust Valley and some of our  
5   areas are so dark and if someone isn't  
6   familiar with the area they might not even  
7   know there's a traffic signal that's supposed  
8   to be in front of you. It's make for an  
9   extremely dangerous intersection sometimes.  
10 Do you know if we can go back to those?

11           MR. SCHNEIDER:   My understanding  
12 is that there are some of the newer pieces of  
13 infrastructure, specifically the traffic  
14 lights, when they do lose power they go into  
15 like a flash mode. But that's something that  
16 obviously we have thousands and thousands of  
17 signals throughout the county. Not every  
18 single one is the same type. So, it's an  
19 interesting premise, and I think it would take  
20 a little bit of time to get that lined up so  
21 that if the power does go down something will  
22 illuminate. But again, it's something that we  
23 have to evaluate going forward.

24           MR. LEAHY:   One of those  
25 challenges is some of those traffic lights are

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2 not all Nassau County. They're town and state  
3 traffic lights and different  
4 responsibilities. So, New York State  
5 Department of Transportation and INFORM take  
6 over some of those major east-west roads and  
7 we work with INFORM and the department of  
8 transportation to try to get those, when  
9 they're out, we work with them to try to get  
10 them restored. But the traffic lights that  
11 flash is when power is restored the box needs  
12 to be reset to reset the timing. That's one  
13 of the challenges.

14 LEGISLATOR FORD: Brian, I'm glad  
15 to hear that we're finally doing that. I was  
16 going to ask because I know we were talking  
17 about doing generators because in the south  
18 shore. But then thinking about some of the  
19 intersections like on the north shore that may  
20 not be under this GOSR grant, is it something  
21 that we can look at moving forward? I know, I  
22 agree, I'm not familiar with all the north  
23 shore roads and a lot of them like I feel like  
24 I'm in the country when I'm up there. You may  
25 not always see the cross streets or whatever.

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2 Especially major intersections. Is it  
3 possible to take a look at that and see if  
4 there's something that we can maybe put into a  
5 capital plan?

6 MR. SCHNEIDER: Yeah. I think in  
7 speaking with the commissioner is something  
8 that -- when I found out that it was only 122  
9 along the South Shore and it was related to  
10 that GOSR grant I think it's definitely  
11 something that we should and we really need to  
12 consider countywide.

13 Getting into the capital plan I  
14 think is something that we would need to move  
15 forward in 2021.

16 LEGISLATOR FORD: I know we have  
17 other questions but Commissioner Morelli, I  
18 know that with OEM we're all like intertwined  
19 and everything like that. We get your updates  
20 and thank you very much for the emails as we  
21 are preparing for storms and everything like  
22 that. Some of the concerns would be OEM's  
23 responsibility or what actions they did prior  
24 to the storm hitting and then afterwards. The  
25 coordination I guess. Like trying to make

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2 sure that PSE&G was aware of like a lot of the  
3 situations that were happening within the  
4 county. Whether or not there were down trees  
5 or I guess you work with DPW and the police  
6 department with traffic signals and so forth.  
7 If you care to give us an update.

8 MR. MORELLI: I'm Steven Morelli,  
9 commissioner from the Office of Emergency  
10 Management. In aligning with what the  
11 inspector said earlier, we also have a 120  
12 hour plan which we had enacted and I had  
13 notified both the administration, all  
14 department heads, as well as the legislature  
15 that we were going to be activating our 120  
16 hour plan to let us know going forward. The  
17 plan is available. I may have sent it out to  
18 some of you in the past but if not I can send  
19 it again.

20 One of our concerns is going  
21 forward and you know based on the amount of  
22 weather briefs that I do send out and you're  
23 all on the weather briefs we focus on the  
24 weather on a regular basis. We keep an eye on  
25 the storms like these two that just came up

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2 Josephine that dissipated and Kyle that came  
3 and went. Again, named storms that are really  
4 early in the season.

5 We are always on top of the  
6 weather. As soon as the 120 hour plan was  
7 activated we get to a point where we have to  
8 make a determination whether or not the EOC is  
9 going to be activated. And when we did get to  
10 the point which I believe was at the 96th  
11 hour, about four days out, all of our partners  
12 were notified. The police department, the  
13 fire marshal -- I'm sorry, the sheriff's  
14 office, the ambulance bureau. We have folks  
15 from Department of Public Works, Department of  
16 Health. We reach out to NICE bus, the MTA,  
17 the Long Island Railroad because  
18 transportation is a major player. And we did  
19 have conversations and we did reach out to  
20 both National Grid and PSE&G.

21 We invite them all. Once we told  
22 them that the EOC would be activating, we  
23 would be opening up at four p.m. I believe on  
24 the Monday prior to the storm, so we were  
25 going to have a full activation. We were

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2 notified by them that they were going to be  
3 doing it virtual. When they do it virtual  
4 it's because they either a staffing issues or  
5 other concerns. COVID is still a very big  
6 concern. A lot of people are hesitant to  
7 enter into an environment that has that many  
8 people in those close quarters. We do  
9 understand that. We did have constant  
10 communication with PSE&G on a regular basis.

11 Again, most of the time we sit in  
12 support of all the other agencies that are out  
13 there, whether they're county agencies,  
14 private organizations or anybody that is going  
15 to need some support based on what we have the  
16 capability to provide to them.

17 We reach out to the towns and  
18 villages and we have a robust communication  
19 with both towns, villages and the two cities  
20 here in Nassau County. So our communication  
21 is very good with our partners.

22 The concerns are what their  
23 concerns actually end up being. Whether it's  
24 road closures or outages or it's a utility  
25 failure. We do everything we can to field

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2 that, to support that and to reach out to the  
3 people who are going to be able to mitigate  
4 that.

5 LEGISLATOR FORD: Speaking with  
6 PSE&G it seems like one of the biggest  
7 challenges we had with this storm and  
8 afterwards is the communications. Everybody  
9 wants to know what's going on. They want  
10 their voices to be heard. We used to have  
11 emergency management meetings. We'd go out to  
12 the public and people would come and we do  
13 presentations to prepare them for incidents  
14 such as these. I know then I guess New York  
15 State took them over because then we went to  
16 something different.

17 MR. MORELLI: New York State did  
18 some of them. Me personally I was going out  
19 and doing them myself and one other gentleman  
20 from my office. He happens to be out with my  
21 surgery. As COVID came along we were  
22 handcuffed in what we were able to do. And  
23 again, the message that we try to get out  
24 there, I know the county executive has gone  
25 out and gone on record with trying to give

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2 people the best advice possible. It's the  
3 same advice we give them every year. What to  
4 do in preparation for, during and post event.

5 LEGISLATOR FORD: Do we have any  
6 meetings I guess, because I know when I used  
7 to have all these meetings and I guess like  
8 everybody was concerned about seniors that --  
9 we talk about seniors that are in nursing  
10 homes or assisted living. But in my area we  
11 have a lot of seniors that are still at home.  
12 They have small little cottages or whatever.  
13 We're always nervous like who's going to watch  
14 out for them? We try to keep an eye on our  
15 neighbors. Those that have special needs, or  
16 whatever.

17 I know that people had asked if  
18 there was a way of coordinating and trying to  
19 get a list so that even we can help out  
20 whether or not through the fire department or  
21 the police department or whatever, so that  
22 we're aware of who are the people who may be  
23 on oxygen or may need to make sure if PSE&G  
24 can't reach them to make sure that they're  
25 okay that we can send personnel out to check

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2 on these people. Is there any way of being  
3 able to accomplish this?

4 MR. MORELLI: You make a very  
5 good point in that the volunteer fire service  
6 is fantastic when it comes to that. Being in  
7 the volunteer fire service now 39 years, we do  
8 have a tremendous outreach with our  
9 constituents, with the people that we  
10 protect. And I know most if not all of the  
11 volunteer fire departments do that as well.  
12 They're best to handle certain aspects of  
13 that, the one or two individuals within their  
14 communities. Everybody should be presenting  
15 that information to PSE&G. And I know it  
16 seems kind of antiquated how we are able to  
17 get on the list so to speak, but then again  
18 there's a lot of people and it's not to say  
19 that somebody's emergency is worse than  
20 another.

21 I received 35 phone calls at my own  
22 home from people in my own community. My air  
23 conditioning is out. So is mine. That's all  
24 I can offer you. There's only so much we can  
25 do. We can offer you emergency shelter in a

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2     hotel, which a lot of people said I don't want  
3     to go to a hotel. I understand that. But  
4     beyond that, all we can do is to work with the  
5     utility as well.

6           We did receive a lot of phone calls  
7     in our office. We did have three primary  
8     liaisons that we dealt with PSE&G and they  
9     were all very receptive. But all they could  
10    do is take the information from us and whether  
11    it was critical or not they could escalate  
12    it. That one more time did not guarantee that  
13    they were going to get service.

14           LEGISLATOR FORD:     Do we have  
15    emergency generators that we can also loan out  
16    to facilities? I know that Legislator  
17    Lafazan, Woodbury Gardens a group of seniors  
18    that were without power. Do we have any type  
19    of backup systems that we can provide --

20           MR. MORELLI:     We do have  
21    generators yes -- I'm sorry. They're  
22    generally not for residential. Should there  
23    be a consideration or concern that is  
24    something that we will work, I promise you, we  
25    will work out. We do have a number of

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2 circumstances where I did have one woman call  
3 me up. She has what they call an LVAD, it's a  
4 left ventricle assist device. It is  
5 essentially her beating heart that's on a  
6 device. She explained to me her batteries are  
7 running low. I said to her one of two  
8 things. I'll pick you up and bring you to a  
9 hospital or we can bring you to the volunteer  
10 fire department. We'll do something to get  
11 your battery charged. I'm not going to let  
12 that happen.

13 But again, when somebody calls and  
14 says that they have no air conditioning or  
15 their food is spoiling we're not going to do  
16 that. But we do have very large sized  
17 generators which we provide to -- early in the  
18 storm we received a call from Rockville  
19 Centre. Their power was down. I know we said  
20 earlier that Rockville Centre has their own  
21 power. They are fed by PSE&G. PSE&G shut  
22 them down and the restart failed. Once the  
23 restart failed they couldn't get anything.

24 My father-in-law is an 82 year old  
25 man with cancer. We had to walk him down six

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2 floors to get out of his senior building to  
3 get him to my son's home in Freeport where he  
4 had power.

5 We brought a generator to Rockville  
6 Centre. The primary objective of that  
7 generator was their water supply. Their water  
8 system. Once that goes down it affects not  
9 just water supply but sanitation as well. So  
10 it becomes a bigger issue, a bigger health  
11 issue.

12 That generator was in place by  
13 about 11 p.m. and they had power restored by  
14 PSE&G about 11:15. So it goes to the amount  
15 of work that goes into it to get the power to  
16 them.

17 We also had an incident in Glen  
18 Cove where four of their five pumps went  
19 down. They reached out to us. The first  
20 thing we did was we found the biggest  
21 generators that we could, got it up to Glen  
22 Cove, had them all hooked up and everything  
23 established. Again, they had power returned  
24 shortly.

25 We have plenty of generation when

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2 it comes to critical infrastructure. Let me  
3 take that back. We don't have plenty. We  
4 have generation when it comes to critical  
5 infrastructure. When it comes to residential  
6 not really.

7 It's more than just saying can you  
8 bring a generator. To lot of people say  
9 that. It's being able to connect that  
10 generator to something. Unless there is  
11 transfer box attached to the building you  
12 can't just put a generator there. You have to  
13 have something that's going to attach to the  
14 building and take over the power supply from  
15 the utility to the generator which will  
16 generate the building. Those are costly and  
17 those are not something that we provide.  
18 That's something that the actual facility --

19 So, to Legislator Lafazan's point,  
20 I don't know if your facility would be able to  
21 handle something to that point. That's not to  
22 say that it's something they couldn't look at  
23 further. My advice to anybody in that  
24 position that has a constituency at that point  
25 I would say that's something they should look

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2 at. I made the point to my father-in-law's  
3 building because this is the third or fourth  
4 time in a village with their own power supply  
5 that he's lost power that me in the next town  
6 didn't. So I made the point it's a senior  
7 citizen building, that's six floors, they  
8 should have some way of generating their own  
9 power. At least to get these folks out.

10 LEGISLATOR FORD: At least for  
11 the elevators. At least one elevator. You're  
12 not even asking if there's three elevators.  
13 One elevator, just have it working.

14 MR. MORELLI: I agree.

15 LEGISLATOR FORD: That to me is  
16 terrible.

17 My question for Brian. In regard  
18 to the county facilities, I mean, obviously  
19 you lost power in some of the facilities. But  
20 do we have -- do you provide generators for  
21 the county facilities?

22 MR. SCHNEIDER: Most of the  
23 critical infrastructure all have backup  
24 generators. For the I think vast, vast  
25 majority none of the county governmental

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2 buildings lost power. There are, however,  
3 county facilities located in parks that did  
4 lose power that are not on emergency  
5 generation.

6 I will give you an example.  
7 Cantiague Park pool lost power. North  
8 Woodmere pool lost power. And that pool leaks  
9 a little bit. So, we lost a little bit of  
10 water in there. Also the amount of debris  
11 that was blowing in those facilities we needed  
12 to shut down those facilities for a couple of  
13 days just to do cleanup.

14 But for the most part all critical  
15 governmental buildings did not lose any power  
16 because they have emergency generation.

17 We do have an issue at Museum Row.  
18 The Cradle of Aviation specifically. There  
19 are bad feeder cables coming from a substation  
20 located on Commercial Avenue. So right now  
21 the Cradle is operating on an emergency  
22 generator that we installed there on Friday  
23 and it's going to take a couple of weeks to  
24 completely replace all the bad feeder cable  
25 that were quite frankly very old. Just the

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2 power surges and the continually on and offs  
3 that were occurring through trying to get the  
4 power back just damaged those cables beyond  
5 repair.

6 We're also having similar issues up  
7 at Sands Point Preserve where that building  
8 needs to operate on an emergency generator.

9 So yes, the bottom line answer is  
10 we do have emergency generators that we can  
11 install at these associated facilities but the  
12 bottom line is that all the critical  
13 governmental buildings did not lose power or  
14 service.

15 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator  
16 Rhoads.

17 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you  
18 Madam Chairwoman. Commissioner Morelli, one  
19 of the things that you mentioned kind of  
20 bothers me a little bit and it's not having  
21 anything to do with OEM necessarily, but the  
22 whole idea behind having the emergency  
23 operation center -- I've been there during a  
24 storm response -- is to have representatives  
25 from every agency and representatives from

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2   every utility there so that you don't have to  
3   pick up the phone and try and reach out to  
4   your contacts at PSE&G.  Somebody from PSE&G  
5   would be there in the EOC so that you can  
6   reach out to them when you have an issue.  So  
7   you can coordinate your traffic signals.  You  
8   can coordinate your police response.  You can  
9   coordinate with Verizon.  You can coordinate  
10  with -- the whole idea behind it is  
11  everybody's sitting, a representative is  
12  sitting in the same place at the same time so  
13  that you don't have these issues of trying to  
14  reach out to other people.  Did we make the  
15  EOC available to them?  Which I understand  
16  from your response we did, right?

17                   MR. MORELLI:     Yes, absolutely.  
18  As I said, once we notified all the players,  
19  PSE&G and National Grid included, we let them  
20  know the EOC was going to be open and there's  
21  a position for them to be seated in the EOC  
22  with us.

23                   LEGISLATOR RHOADS:     And they  
24  opted not to --

25                   MR. MORELLI:     Like I said, they

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2 at the time chose to work remote or to work  
3 virtual which was going to be easier for them  
4 at the time.

5 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: It didn't  
6 work obviously.

7 MR. MORELLI: Within about two  
8 days there was representation in there, the  
9 EOC, from PSE&G. They did come about two days  
10 later. That was primarily just -- I don't  
11 want to say it was customer service but for  
12 the most part it was us forwarding them  
13 information with respect to outages that we  
14 were hearing or live wires that were down and  
15 whatnot. Additional calls from people that  
16 have lifesaving equipment or life-support  
17 equipment rather and having them escalate the  
18 information there. But it wasn't to the  
19 degree that we had seen in the past where  
20 there was an engineer there with a map to that  
21 point, no.

22 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Even for the  
23 simple exchange change of information it  
24 becomes critical to have them there.

25 MR. MORELLI: I agree.

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2 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Is there a  
3 way for us to be able to compel them to send a  
4 representative when the EOC is activated?

5 MR. MORELLI: I agree it would be  
6 a terrific idea. And as the folks from PSE&G  
7 also noted, their after-action report I'm  
8 anxious to see as well. But we are also  
9 completing our own after-action report which  
10 we do after any activation to that point.  
11 That will be a very big focus of it the fact  
12 that -- we tried to get Optimum and Altice.  
13 They didn't arrive. Verizon didn't arrive.

14 I can make the compelling argument  
15 unless there's something that's going to  
16 mandate them I don't know beyond a good  
17 argument. But we did have communication both  
18 with their emergency preparedness compliance  
19 leader and a number of folks within their EOC  
20 that were operating with us virtually.

21 I was on several conference calls  
22 with their administration and government  
23 officials as well trying to make those  
24 points. Most of those calls were just a lot  
25 of people saying we're still having outages

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2 here, we're still having outages there or them  
3 just following up on what the outage map was  
4 dictating to us.

5 But beyond that I agree with you.  
6 That's a very strong point. Something that we  
7 will work to improve next time around, which I  
8 hope doesn't come any time soon.

9 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Right. We  
10 should all hope that. Can you get us a list  
11 of who typically is supposed to have a seat at  
12 the table when the EOC is --

13 MR. MORELLI: Absolutely. I can  
14 do that.

15 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: --  
16 activated. Who actually bothered to show up  
17 and who didn't so we can at least have that  
18 information?

19 MR. MORELLI: As I said, I can  
20 forward you the 120 hour plan which includes  
21 all that as well as I can give you a schematic  
22 of the EOC itself, the emergency operation  
23 center itself and who has a seat where.

24 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Great because  
25 I would love to follow-up with PSE&G and

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2 Altice. And when we're talking about  
3 communications problems if we can't talk to  
4 each other --

5 MR. MORELLI: I agree.

6 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: -- that makes  
7 it infinitely more difficult.

8 In terms of the 120 hour plan, at  
9 any point in that 120 hour plan, at any point  
10 in that 120 hour plan was there a decision  
11 whether to open or not to open shelters?

12 MR. MORELLI: Yes. We looked  
13 into the sheltering plan at the very  
14 beginning. In dealing with the National  
15 Weather Service, the American Red Cross, we  
16 determined from their perspective -- we just  
17 support the shelters. We don't actually open  
18 the shelters ourselves. These are directives  
19 given by the Red Cross at the insistence of  
20 the Red Cross. We support them in that we  
21 will stock them with the cots and linens that  
22 they're going to need and whatever else  
23 they're going to need. Especially at this  
24 point now personal protective equipment.

25 But as the storm was being examined

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2 and as the storm was being watched by both the  
3 National Weather Service and the Red Cross  
4 there was no determination whether shelters  
5 should be opened because we weren't going to  
6 see surge, we weren't going to see that high  
7 tidal period and the idea that we were going  
8 to see that amount of water that would be that  
9 bad wasn't there. So the decision was not to  
10 open shelters.

11 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Who  
12 ultimately made that call or was it a  
13 collaborative effort?

14 MR. MORELLI: It was pretty much  
15 a collaborative effort. It's between the Red  
16 Cross, the weather service, my office, the  
17 administration. As we said, we took a look at  
18 all of this. Let me backtrack. I want to  
19 take the administration out of that because  
20 they're just going to follow the lead that we  
21 have but there was no indication that shelters  
22 needed to be opened.

23 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Obviously  
24 there wasn't going to be significant storm  
25 surge. We knew that going in. But we knew

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2 there would be sustained wind and gusts to the  
3 point where we did anticipate that there would  
4 be some power outages. I don't know that we  
5 anticipated the extent of the power outages  
6 but we knew there was going to be some.

7 As part of that 120 hour plan, do  
8 we ever consider opening at least one shelter  
9 for some critical care -- individuals that  
10 have critical care needs to get access to a  
11 place that has power so that they can, you  
12 know, recharge a wheelchair or, you know, had  
13 their oxygen machine going or there's some  
14 place that they can go if they can't stay  
15 where they are?

16 MR. MORELLI: Again, as I said,  
17 the Red Cross pretty much is in charge of the  
18 shelters. Their decision was that there were  
19 no shelters needed. Should we have to open an  
20 emergency shelter in each legislative district  
21 there is a trailer that contains 100 cots and  
22 linens and whatnot. Should we have to open an  
23 emergency shelter somewhere it could be done  
24 pretty fast.

25 But as I said, there was no real

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2 need for that at the time. We didn't see any  
3 need. Again, based on the list that we were  
4 seeing as far as the outages that were coming,  
5 most of it was just power. There were no real  
6 hazards and no real no risks that people were  
7 in jeopardy. And if we needed to, we did have  
8 about 150 hotel rooms available should people  
9 need to be removed from their homes for even a  
10 day or two. If they needed them we could have  
11 had these folks relocated to a safer  
12 environment.

13 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: How did we  
14 communicate that information to residents? In  
15 other words, it's great to have them but if  
16 people don't know we have them.

17 MR. MORELLI: Understood. As we  
18 do during the winter with Warm Bed and during  
19 the summer with Cool Bed, that's one of the  
20 ways that -- and I'm not dumping it now on the  
21 Department of Social Services, but they're the  
22 ones that help with emergency housing.

23 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Okay.

24 MR. MORELLI: What we can do, and  
25 this is something that's actually in the

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2 works, we're just waiting to have it approved  
3 from -- we have to have communications take a  
4 look at it -- is a mailing that we do every  
5 year to give folks some of the points. I  
6 don't want to say it's rote information but  
7 it's pretty much the same information every  
8 year. As well as some points and some tips on  
9 what they can do to keep themselves prepared.  
10 We warn everybody please at least be prepared  
11 for three to five days. While we hate the  
12 idea of that, to be prepared for three to five  
13 days and to make some of these arrangements  
14 ahead of time.

15 Should you know a storm is coming  
16 and you're in a position where you have a  
17 piece of life-sustaining equipment and your  
18 battery may not hold out for a period of time,  
19 I'm not saying that it's your responsibility  
20 or my responsibility, but it's somebody's  
21 responsibility to make sure that that's  
22 addressed.

23 Our office the phone is there 24  
24 hours a day. We're available to help give  
25 people any measure of advice, give any measure

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2 of advice, give any measure of information  
3 with respect to what they can do in an  
4 emergency. It doesn't necessarily have to be  
5 a storm. It could be for anything. Should  
6 they have a problem we are always there to be  
7 able to direct them in the right direction.

8 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Obviously as  
9 part of the EOC Social Services would have  
10 been there and was there --

11 MR. MORELLI: Yes.

12 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: -- at the  
13 EOC? So they would have access to --

14 MR. MORELLI: Yes.

15 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: -- to that.

16 I'm curious though whether it's  
17 more cost effective to put people in hotel  
18 rooms versus having one specific central  
19 location where everybody can go, but.

20 MR. MORELLI: Speaking from  
21 someone who slept on an army cot in storms  
22 like this I wouldn't put any elderly person on  
23 that. It's nothing but a piece of very tight  
24 canvass. To put somebody on that thing for an  
25 extended period of time -- listen, this is

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2 just me spitballing here, if you have somebody  
3 that can't afford the hotel here's my credit  
4 card. I don't want to see anybody suffering.

5 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: We don't  
6 provide the rooms?

7 MR. MORELLI: No, I'm just making  
8 the point. I'd be happy to take care of it if  
9 somebody had an issue. The point is the rooms  
10 are available. Should somebody need a hotel  
11 room they are available.

12 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: But we will  
13 actually put them up in a hotel room?

14 MR. MORELLI: Yes.

15 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Where we  
16 don't expect them to --

17 MR. MORELLI: No. We're not  
18 asking for their card. I'm just being smart.

19 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: In terms of  
20 generators and other assets, in advance of the  
21 storm did we relocate any of those assets to  
22 critical areas that we thought might be at  
23 risk?

24 MR. MORELLI: As far as  
25 generators go it's not so much that they can

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2 be relocated anywhere. Again, a facility has  
3 to be ready to receive a generator. A school  
4 has to be able to accept a generator if you're  
5 going to make it a shelter. One of the  
6 critical locations such as the water plant in  
7 Glen Cove, such as what they had in Rockville  
8 Centre, it has to be ready to receive a  
9 generator. So it's not that we can just put a  
10 generator in town.

11 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: We're not  
12 talking about an 8500 watt generator you can  
13 plug into your --

14 MR. MORELLI: We do have a number  
15 of generators. But one more time, what are we  
16 relocating them for? If it's to power up one  
17 of the street lights that we were talking  
18 about, again, a lot of that came from the  
19 state and we do have generators that we can do  
20 that but you can't foresee those things.

21 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Those are  
22 small Generac generators thought, right?  
23 We're not talking about the big generators?

24 MR. MORELLI: Well right now we  
25 have 53 good size generators and about 108

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2 portable generators. When I say portable  
3 they're the ones that you see at the fire  
4 houses with the light that flips up on them.  
5 The Honda generator. But a bunch of good  
6 sized Generac generators that we do have.

7 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I didn't know  
8 if in advance of the storm we relocated some  
9 to Cedar Creek so that they would be on the  
10 south shore if we needed them on the south  
11 shore. I'm speaking in particular of the  
12 example that I gave with Empire Hose Company.  
13 Whether we might have been able to provide a  
14 generator there if we were aware of the issue  
15 a little earlier.

16 MR. MORELLI: If they're able to  
17 receive generation and we have a critical  
18 infrastructure list here that's got almost  
19 1200 locations here in Nassau County.

20 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Great. Any  
21 chance we can share that with PSE&G because --

22 MR. MORELLI: This is their list.

23 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: So they had  
24 that information?

25 MR. MORELLI: 1189 different

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2 locations where we have -- and most firehouses  
3 are on there. Most village police departments  
4 are on there. A lot of village halls.

5 And again, it's not so much just  
6 send me a generator. It's are they ready to  
7 receive a generator. Is it going to be big  
8 enough for their needs as well.

9 And we did relocate one high axle  
10 vehicle to Island Park. They generally have  
11 an issue with respect to flooding. So we  
12 wanted to make sure -- I know they do have  
13 one. We did send them another in the event  
14 that they had to evacuate some of their  
15 residents.

16 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: In terms of  
17 the -- obviously there were several  
18 intersections that were out of power. Two  
19 that come to mind are Merrick Avenue and  
20 Sunrise Highway and Merrick Avenue and Merrick  
21 Road, which were out for a substantial period  
22 of time. I think three or four days if I'm  
23 not mistaken. As far as I know, the  
24 generators weren't sent to that location. I  
25 was curious as to why, one.

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2 But two, in the absence of a  
3 generator at that location we also didn't have  
4 a police officer there directing traffic.  
5 Those are pretty major intersections where  
6 leaving people to their own devices as to  
7 whether or not they can safely make a turn  
8 onto Merrick Road from Merrick Avenue or try  
9 and cross Sunrise Highway from that location  
10 it's a pretty big gamble.

11 Did we not have, one, why was there  
12 no generator? Two, did we not have enough  
13 manpower to be able to place a police officer  
14 at that location? I think it's Sunrise  
15 Highway which blocked off the ability to make  
16 a left-hand turn from Sunrise either  
17 northbound or southbound on Merrick Avenue.  
18 But if you were trying to get out off of  
19 Merrick Avenue onto Sunrise or Merrick Road  
20 good luck.

21 MR. LEAHY: That is a state  
22 road. That would be a New York State  
23 Transportation. They would be responsible for  
24 that.

25 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: But popping a

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2 police officer there is our responsibility.

3 MR. LEAHY: Depending on the  
4 calls for service and what their priorities  
5 are, they can get pulled off depending on what  
6 it is. What we try to do is work with DPW to  
7 create roundabouts. We've done that in the  
8 past. Put barrels up. Take left-turn lanes  
9 out. Everybody makes a right and then  
10 mid-turn you will have the opportunity to make  
11 a U-turn and continue to make a right turn.

12 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Did we bring  
13 officers in on overtime?

14 MR. LEAHY: I said I would check  
15 to make sure but I will check when I get back.

16 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: That's  
17 something that we would typically do if we  
18 were short, right?

19 MR. LEAHY: We have a full  
20 staff. We make sure we're fully staffed for  
21 these events. We make sure that the units  
22 that would be doing other things are pulled in  
23 to the response mode. That we have extras on  
24 the road. We pulled resources at the height  
25 of the storm and 2 o'clock in the afternoon we

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2 had 2,000 calls for service in an hour.

3 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Obviously if  
4 we thought that either for calls for service  
5 or to protect an intersection you thought that  
6 it was necessary to have somebody you'd called  
7 them.

8 MR. LEAHY: We have brought them  
9 in when the outage is extended. That's some  
10 of the importance of being able to have  
11 somebody inside OEM. Somebody to have that  
12 open line of communication. That  
13 communication failure presents challenges for  
14 us and for communications bureau when we're  
15 trying to evaluate manpower allocations. So  
16 it does present some challenges. But we do  
17 bring people in to address that.

18 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Just so I'm  
19 correct in my understanding Deputy County  
20 Executive Schneider, you did mention that  
21 PSE&G was provided with the traffic outage?

22 MR. SCHNEIDER: Yes. As of 8:54  
23 on Tuesday evening.

24 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you.

25 LEGISLATOR FORD: Any other

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2 legislators? Thank you very much gentlemen.

3 Commissioner Morelli, when you're  
4 going to send out this year about emergency  
5 preparedness I guess can you let us know when  
6 you're going to send it out and hopefully you  
7 maybe can include not so much the hotel rooms  
8 but how about, which I learned just from  
9 talking back here, is that people who have I  
10 guess oxygen machines, whatever, correct me if  
11 I'm wrong my emergency people, that somebody  
12 can come to the house and like provide power  
13 for it or something like that or regenerate --  
14 what is it? Like give power. Maybe restore  
15 the power to the backup generator or to the  
16 oxygen machine they can just power it up so  
17 that the backup will work and stuff like that  
18 so the oxygen will work. Am I saying that  
19 right? To charge it up. It's been a long  
20 couple of weeks. Thank you very much. Thanks  
21 for staying around.

22 MR. MORELLI: That's generally  
23 not something that we do. But my point being  
24 is if you're having a situation to that point,  
25 again, of widespread outages, I'm not going to

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2   be able to solve. Should an individual have  
3   that point we would do everything we can to  
4   get them back up and running. That's the  
5   point that I will make when that brochure goes  
6   out.

7           LEGISLATOR FORD:     Also I guess  
8   even coordination with 911 so that if people  
9   are in need of housing for some odd reason  
10   that we are able to identify those people and  
11   then perhaps have them work with OEM to see if  
12   they should be placed in a hotel. People may  
13   not have registered but all of sudden they  
14   find themselves -- they just came out of the  
15   hospital and they need this equipment or their  
16   medicine or whatever, just anything to make  
17   sure that we can keep them safe during any  
18   type of storm.

19           MR. MORELLI:     That additional  
20   registration information with respect to PSE&G  
21   and any other utility as well, and again it  
22   goes even just beyond that to Altice and  
23   Verizon as well. Because of the fact that  
24   some people do have the button. That phone is  
25   out the buttons aren't going to be able to

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2 activate. That information will also go into  
3 the brochure so they're able to address those  
4 needs specifically with the utility.

5 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you. And  
6 we will be following up with PSE&G to ask them  
7 why they weren't up at the OEM center and why  
8 they did not acknowledge that they had the  
9 list of all the traffic signals during this  
10 hearing. But thank you very much. Everyone  
11 thank you for --

12 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Last  
13 question. I got the instructions to hurry up  
14 so I will. Do you have the opportunity once  
15 you guys do your after-action report, your own  
16 analysis of OEM's response, do you have the  
17 opportunity to communicate with PSE&G and  
18 suggest changes?

19 MR. MORELLI: Absolutely, yes.

20 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: One of the  
21 things that Legislator DeRiggi-Whitton had  
22 mentioned was that you had crews coming in  
23 from out of state that came in from out of  
24 state that had no direction as to where they  
25 were supposed to be going. Clearly that's a

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2 failure in leadership on PSE&G's part.  
3 Obviously we operate under NIMS. There would  
4 never be a situation where on the emergency  
5 response side that you would have outside  
6 agencies coming in that wouldn't know who to  
7 report to --

8 MR. MORELLI: That wouldn't have  
9 direction.

10 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: There has to  
11 be instruction. Can you work with them on  
12 that? Would they accept that input from us?

13 MR. MORELLI: We can certainly  
14 breach the topic and offer whatever we can. I  
15 agree with you there does have to be some  
16 better coordination. We had people actually  
17 calling our office saying that the trucks are  
18 in front of their house and they don't have  
19 the supplies or they haven't been told what to  
20 do. Again, most of these folks were from out  
21 of state. That's certainly something that we  
22 can put together or at least -- we meet with  
23 the folks from PSE&G, believe it or not we  
24 meet with them regularly and we have regular  
25 communications with their emergency

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2 preparedness leader, Brendan Beebe. There's  
3 no reason in the world why we can't breach  
4 this topic with them and see if we can't  
5 collaboratively do something to help mitigate  
6 that problem. I agree with you.

7 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Even with  
8 their Clear to Call -- Clear to Clear list in  
9 coordinating with the town and the county as  
10 far as whether a road is safe to clear or a  
11 condition is safe to clear, again, having  
12 somebody physically in the EOC would have been  
13 helpful.

14 MR. MORELLI: Very helpful. I  
15 agree.

16 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I appreciate  
17 the follow-up. Thank you.

18 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you  
19 everyone. Have a good afternoon. Thank you  
20 very much legislators and everybody else in  
21 the audience.

22 (Committee adjourned at 1:29 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATION

I, FRANK GRAY, a Notary  
Public in and for the State of New  
York, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing is a true and  
accurate transcript of my stenographic  
notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have  
hereunto set my hand this 25th day of  
August 2020

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FRANK GRAY