

# Inter-County Association of Western New York

*Representing the Counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates*

## RESOLUTION NO. 2023-19-IC

### **A RESOLUTION ASKING GOVERNOR HOCHUL AND THE NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION TO DENY THE NYSEG AND RG&E RATE HIKE REQUESTS, AND TO CORRECT THE BILLING PROBLEMS BEFORE RATE HIKES ARE CONSIDERED**

**Sponsored By:** Allegany County

**Moved By:** Gary Barnes (Allegany)

**Seconded By:** Brenda Rigby Riehle (Allegany)

**WHEREAS**, several Western New York Counties' residents are served by both NYSEG and RG&E for their electric utilities; and

**WHEREAS**, NYSEG has requested a 34.9 percent rate increase for electric customers and 14.9 percent for gas customers, which together would result in an annual bill increase of approximately \$240 for the average residential customer; and

**WHEREAS**, RG&E has requested a 21 percent rate increase for electric customers and 18.8 percent for gas customers, which combined would result in an annual bill increase of approximately \$260 for an average residential customer; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Hochul called NYSGEG and RG&E's rate hike requests "outrageous and unacceptable," and urged the New York State Department of Public Service to "scrutinize every number and word of this proposal to protect New York families from unjustified and unfair rate increases"; and

**WHEREAS**, New York State Department of Public Service staff experts have reviewed the NYSEG and RG&E rate filings, and as documented in public records, testified to the many deficiencies and errors contained in those filings; and

**WHEREAS**, New York State Department of Public Service staff further stated that NYSEG and RG&E have been vague and non-responsive to their questions, that this is the second successive rate filing in which these issues have occurred, and that similar problems were noted in a 2016 management audit; and

**WHEREAS**, 16 NYCRR Part 61, which contains the rules of procedure governing rate increase proceedings, require NYSEG and RG&E to provide "competent testimony" with detailed financial justification that is "neither speculative or conjectural" to support their rate increase requests, but both companies have failed to do so; and

**WHEREAS**, the New York State Public Service Commission is undertaking an investigation of the billing practices of NYSEG and RG&E because the number of consumer complaints skyrocketed to more than 4,700 in 2022, which is 60 percent more than the two previous years combined; and

**WHEREAS**, the billing problems caused by NYSEG and RG&E as well as the inadequacies of the rate increase filings call into question the administrative competence of these monopoly utilities, and public trust, including the trust of the residents of Western New York Counties, has been eroded; and

**WHEREAS**, double-digit rate hikes proposed by NYSEG and RG&E while New Yorkers and Western New York Counties' residents, struggle under the burdens of inflation, increased housing costs, and other economic uncertainty is unconscionable and must be denied. Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Inter-County Association of Western New York calls on the New York State Public Service Commission and Governor Kathy Hochul to deny the NYSEG and RG&E rate requests and to protect the public interest by making sure both companies correct their billing and submit proper, detailed, rate filings before substantive rate hikes are considered. Be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Secretary of Inter-County Association of Western New York shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Kathy Hochul, Senator George M. Borrello, Senator Thomas F. O'Mara, Assemblyman Joseph M. Giglio, New York State Public Service Commission Chairperson Rory Christian, New York State Public Service Commission Secretary Michelle Phillips, the New York State Association of Counties, and the Inter-County Association of Western New York.

This is to Certify that I, the undersigned, Secretary of the Inter-County Association of Western New York, have compared the foregoing copy of resolution with the original resolution now on file in this office and which was duly adopted by the Association at a session held on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of June 2023 and that the same is a true copy of said original and of the whole thereof. In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed the official seal of the Inter-County Association of Western New York dated June 23, 2023.



Lisa K. Casey, Secretary  
Inter-County Association of Western New York



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