

NEW JERSEY STATE AFL-CIO

106 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08608

(609) 989-8730
FAX (609) 989-8734

www.njafclcio.org



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May 2, 2013

Robert M. Hanna
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Members of the NJ Board of Public Utilities:

When Super Storm Sandy devastated New Jersey last year, the state and its residents were faced with a level of destruction not seen before as a result of a natural disaster. The New Jersey State AFL-CIO aggressively engaged in community services to help our members, and the general public that were adversely effected by the storm, and we continue to do so.

Of course, one of the most difficult impacts of the storm was the loss of electricity and heat. The storm shined a light on the desperate need to invest and upgrade New Jersey's energy systems. Without these upgrades and repairs, our state's utility infrastructure will continue to be vulnerable to these types of natural disasters.

For this reason, our organization supports PSE&G's "Energy Strong" initiative. This initiative will help strengthen our energy infrastructure by protecting natural gas metering stations, and upgrading underground gas pipes, especially those that are in flood areas. These upgrades would make it easier to restore power and heat in times of emergencies.

Of course, this initiative will also help New Jersey's lagging economy by creating jobs in the construction industry. It is estimated that the "Energy Strong" initiative would create 5,800 jobs. During our states high level of unemployment, and considering the painfully high unemployment in the construction sector, this initiative would be a "win-win" for consumers and the economy. Furthermore, due to various costs coming off ratepayers bill's through 2016, PSE&G anticipates consumers bills will remain cost neutral.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask for your support of the "Energy Strong" program. Thank you for your consideration to our views on this important matter and please contact us if you have questions or if we can be helpful in this regard.

Sincerely,

Charles Wowkanech
President

Laurel Brennan
Secretary-Treasurer

CW:LB:jn
OPEIU:153

"The Voice for Working Families in New Jersey"