NEW YORK STATE | Public Service Commission

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

RORY M. CHRISTIAN
Chair

May 7, 2026

Via E-Mail

Scott Jennings
President & Chief Operating Officer
PSEG Long Island
175 East Old Country Rd
Hicksville, NY 11801
scott.jennings@pseg.com

Re: Matter 26-00971: In the Matter of Department of Public Service Investigation into Utility Collections Practices

Dear Scott Jennings,

I am writing in response to recent reporting in the New York Times and Newsday describing a utility collections conference, attended by multiple New York utilities, in which an employee from one of the utilities reportedly joked that "people think much better in the dark" when discussing service shutoffs. Let me be clear: there is nothing humorous about a household losing essential utility service. For many New Yorkers, a shutoff is not an abstract enforcement tool, it is a moment of real hardship, with consequences for health, safety, and dignity.

Remarks like this are wholly inappropriate and cannot be dismissed as offhand humor. They reflect, at best, a troubling lapse in judgment and, at worst, a deeper corporate cultural issue that risks normalizing indifference toward the very customers and communities utilities are obligated to serve. The public entrusts utilities with the provision of essential services under a compact that demands not only reliability, but respect, and fairness.

We expect utilities and their employees, at every level, to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and customer care. That includes recognizing that service termination policies, while sometimes necessary, must always be administered with sensitivity, transparency, and a clear focus on minimizing harm.

As such, provide the Department of Public Service your responses to the following in Matter 26-00971 by May 18, 2026:

1. Affirm that no ratepayer funds were used for any expenses related to attending the 2026 Annual Utilities Credit & Collections Symposium, which took place at the Hyatt Regency Coral Gables and any previous iterations of this event.

2. Provide a list of all utility staff attendance at the 2026 Annual Utilities Credit & Collections Symposium, and all similar collections events. Also, indicate the costs incurred by ratepayers for attendance, if any.

3. Identify any programs or incentive structures utilized with third-party revenue or arrears collection vendors.

4. Provide all documents, including but not limited to any policy, standard operation procedure, manual(s), or employee training materials, and a detailed description of all existing practices and policies related to arrears and revenue collection.

5. Provide all documents including but not limited to any policy, standard operation procedure, manual(s), or employee training materials, and a detailed description for the qualification and termination of service for Life Saving Equipment (LSE) customers, senior citizens, and medically impaired individuals.

6. Provide a detailed breakdown of the process and timeline for customer notifications issued in pursuit of termination for arrears.

7. Confirm the use of Deferred Payment Agreements (DPAs) as a mechanism to help customers avoid service shut-offs and provide all documents including but not limited to any policy, standard operation procedure, manual(s), or employee training materials, and a detailed description of the utility's process to implement DPAs.

8. Affirm that the utilities' practices are consistent with the Public Service Commission's Rules and Regulations pursuant to Title 16 of the N.Y.C.R.R.

Utilities must recommit to a culture that prioritizes affordability, compassion, and exemplary customer service, especially for those most vulnerable. Failure by New York State's utilities and utility service providers to uphold such a culture and to administer their programs in accordance with the Public Service Law, the Commission's Rules, Regulations, and Orders will result in further action by the Department.

Sincerely,

Rory M. Christian
Chair and Chief Executive Officer