



**Didi Barrett**

Assemblymember 106<sup>th</sup> District  
Columbia County  
Dutchess County

**THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY**

CHAIR  
Energy

COMMITTEES  
Agriculture  
Environmental Conservation  
Mental Health  
Tourism, Parks, Arts and  
Sports Development

March 1, 2023

Rory Christian  
Chair and Chief Executive Officer  
NYS Public Service Commission  
Empire State Plaza  
Agency Building 3  
Albany, NY 12223-1350

Dear Chair Christian,

I write today to share my concerns with the Public Service Commission's (PSC) recent approval of upgrades to transmission lines that distribute power generated in Upstate New York to the downstate region while disproportionately increasing upstate utility rates.

A recent Times Union article entitled, "Power Lines will be Upgraded, but Who Really Pays," details the PSC's approval of necessary investments in the grid. However, it brought to light that, proportionally, Upstate New York consumers will see a steeper percentage increase in rates than downstate, with an average increase of 8.2% for upstate ratepayers versus an increase of 3.8% for downstate ratepayers.

When I voted for the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act in 2019, it was with a commitment to protect communities throughout New York while meeting our climate goals. This commitment calls for a 'holistic just transition', providing affordability and reliability to all New Yorkers - regardless of where they live - and balancing economic burdens fairly. I believe, based on our recent conversations, that affordability and equity are priorities for you, as well.

I urge the PSC to review the current funding mechanism of building out New York State's transmission lines. Providing clean, renewable energy is of the utmost importance to achieving our climate goals. That said, disproportionately increasing utility rates for Upstate New Yorkers to subsidize the cost of expanding transmission lines that move energy downstate is certainly not in alignment with our "community protection" commitment. Almost all (91%) of Upstate New York's energy production is from emissions-free sources, while only 9% of downstate energy production is emissions-free. Why is the cost of transmitting energy produced in Upstate New York being borne on Upstate ratepayers, rather than those actually consuming the energy?

I am happy to discuss this issue and work together to solve this inequity. I thank you for your consideration of this matter and look forward to hearing from you.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to my office with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Didi Barrett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Didi" and last name "Barrett" clearly distinguishable.

Didi Barrett  
Member of Assembly, 106th District

cc: Commissioner John Howard  
Commissioner Diane Burman  
Commissioner John Maggione  
Commissioner David Valesky  
Commissioner James Alesi  
Commissioner Tracey Edwards