

NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HONORABLE
CRAIG J. COUGHLIN
SPEAKER

MAJORITY OFFICE
STATE HOUSE-SOUTH WING-SUITE LB110
PO BOX 098
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0098
(609) 847-3500

SETH HAHN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Assembly Democratic Caucus
DATE: February 27, 2025
RE: Message Points on Utility Costs

- It is unacceptable that utility rates are set to rise as much as 20% this summer.
 - There has been a complete system failure when it comes to keeping utilities affordable for New Jersey residents.
 - Energy suppliers have not done enough to make sure we can keep up with demand. Utility companies have been all too happy to rack up profits at the expense of New Jersey ratepayers. And the Board of Public Utilities has failed to protect the pocketbooks of middle class families.
 - The legislature will keep all options on the table and step in if energy suppliers and utility companies continue to put greed in front of the best interests of New Jersey ratepayers.
 - We will demand more transparency when it comes to utility rates to ensure these companies are answering to the public when they want to raise rates.
 - We will demand more protections to keep rates low.
 - We will hold profitable companies accountable and make sure they are not gouging New Jersey ratepayers.
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- Democrats in New Jersey have had an “all of the above” approach to energy production.
 - We have led efforts to increase every type of energy to ensure affordable rates for consumers.
 - We have led the nation in efforts to create clean energy, which would make New Jersey energy independent while creating thousands of good paying, middle class jobs here at home.
 - Whether it is solar, wind, nuclear or storage, Democrats have been at the forefront of every effort to create more energy here in New Jersey to keep rates low.

- Unfortunately, we've been fought every step of the way by Republicans, who are beholden to their corporate donors from places like Texas, Oklahoma, and Venezuela.
- Republicans have opposed efforts to create wind, electric, nuclear and solar energy, and the new Administration in Washington has destroyed nearly a decade of work to produce wind energy off the Jersey shore.
- A significant problem is the energy supplier PJM.
 - PJM is a powerful organization operating the electric grid that services 13 states.
 - PJM has prioritized dirty power plants over clean energy as states like New Jersey have prioritized clean energy. PJM's foot-dragging is why we're now facing an energy shortage.
 - They've also ignored affordability in long term energy markets, leading to increases in the cost of electricity, and they have failed to provide meaningful cost containment on large transmission projects—passing off unreasonable costs to ratepayers instead.
 - PJM has massive conflicts of interest with dirty, out-of-state energy producers and transmission operators. They make decisions away from public scrutiny to benefit these companies at the expense of New Jersey ratepayers and they don't consider costs to consumers.
- Republicans can criticize all they want, but the fact is the reason rates are going up is there is not enough energy to meet demand. Republicans have fought against us tooth and nail on production of new energy on everything other than dirty energy like oil and coal.
- Democrats want to create clean, sustainable energy that will create energy independence and good jobs in New Jersey, but Republicans have fought us every step of the way because they are beholden to out of state, corporate oil and gas interests.
- The reality is that we are here because Republicans are answering to the dirty oil and coal companies funding their campaigns, who want pipelines pumping in energy from out of state. Democrats want solutions that will create jobs here and make sure New Jersey creates its own energy.
- We will continue to keep all options and all types of energy production on the table. And if the concerns of everyday New Jerseyans continue to be ignored by PJM, we will be forced to question whether New Jersey should remain a part of it.
- We will continue to emphasize the production of energy that will create good paying jobs here in New Jersey instead of having us pay to import energy from other states.
- Democrats will hold hearings and develop bills that will keep costs low, hold energy and utility companies accountable, and create more transparency. We will ensure the interests of ratepayers are first for a change, and we will not stop working until we have answers from energy companies that are ripping us off and a solution for people in New Jersey that keeps costs low.