



## Legislation Text

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### Res. No. 1727

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to amend H.R. 3684, the INVEST in America Act, to include funding for relocating power lines in the outer boroughs underground and funding to ensure coastal protections for New York City.

By Council Members Gjonaj, Brannan, Holden and Yeger

Whereas, Over the last decade, New York City (City) has experienced some of its hottest summer months and extreme weather events ever recorded; and

Whereas, The year 2020 was a record-breaking Atlantic hurricane season ending with 30 named storms, of which 14 became hurricanes; and

Whereas, 2020 marked the fifth consecutive year with an above average Atlantic hurricane season, with 18 seasons above the average out of the past 26; and

Whereas, Researchers have warned of another active hurricane season in 2021, predicting the occurrence of 13 to 20 named tropical systems, with ten reaching hurricane status, while the City is still unprepared for another severe weather event like Superstorm Sandy; and

Whereas, As a result of potential heatwaves and storms occurring throughout the summer months amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the City must prepare for higher rates of emergencies, enforce social distancing to keep New Yorkers safe, all while trying to deal with severe weather events, dangerously high temperatures and keeping residents cool; and.

Whereas, In August 2020, Tropical Storm Isaias (Isaias) delivered heavy rain and strong winds to the City, along with New Jersey and Connecticut leaving over two and a half million residents without power; and

Whereas, Isaias left nearly 267,000 New York City and Westchester County Con Edison customers

without power, which surpassed the 204,000 outages caused by Hurricane Irene in 2011, the borough of Queens had the most power outages with nearly 50,000 residents without power, Staten Island residents were hit the hardest per capita with 36,000 without power, the Bronx had approximately 22,700 customers without power, 10,057 in Brooklyn and 67 in Manhattan, as well; and

Whereas, Isaias brought down more than 7,000 wires causing the second biggest power outage for customers in Consolidated Edison's (Con Edison) history behind Superstorm Sandy in 2012, which caused approximately 1.1million outages; and

Whereas, Superstorm Sandy devastated the City with nearly 2 million residents losing power and service was not restored to some New Yorkers for several days, and for others it took weeks after the storm; and

Whereas, Severe weather events with high winds such as Superstorm Sandy and Isaias often knock down above-ground power lines, resulting in numerous power outages; and

Whereas, Con Edison provides electricity to over three million customers in the City and Westchester County and is the primary utility serving City residents throughout the five boroughs maintaining over 36,000 miles of overhead electrical wires in the New York area; and

Whereas, All of the boroughs other than Manhattan are particularly susceptible to power outages, due to the majority of power lines being run above-ground, making them vulnerable to downed trees and storm damage; and

Whereas, There have been discussions between elected officials and residents to move these power lines underground, however the cost for such a conversion would be approximately \$1 million per mile; and

Whereas, Currently, the United States Congress passed H.R. 3684, the INVEST in America Act (Act), which will include \$550 billion in new federal investments in America's infrastructure over the next five years; and

Whereas, The Act will invest \$73 billion to rebuild the electric grid with thousands of miles of new power lines, \$17 billion in port infrastructure and \$3.5 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA) to reduce damage from flooding; and

Whereas, The Act should also include investments in resiliency measures to reduce the impacts of coastal storm flooding throughout the City; and

Whereas, Furthermore, the Act should include investments in relocating the City's power lines underground since it is inevitable that the City will continue experiencing power outages resulting from extreme weather events knocking down power lines; and

Whereas, Relocating such power lines to underground locations, where feasible, may mitigate power outages during future severe weather events; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to amend H.R. 3684, the INVEST in America Act, to include funding for relocating power lines in the outer boroughs underground and funding to ensure coastal protections for New York City.

PM  
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