Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	Res 0172-2022	**Version:**	*	**Name:**	New York State to increase the number of Commissioners on the Public Service Commission and permit New York City to appoint two of its Commissioners.
Type:	Resolution			**Status:**	Adopted
				In control:	Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection
On agenda:	5/19/2022				
Enactment date:				**Enactment #:**	
Title:	Resolution calling on New York State to increase the number of Commissioners on the Public Service Commission and permit New York City to appoint two of its Commissioners				
Sponsors:	Rafael Salamanca, Jr., Kalman Yeger, Sandy Nurse, Mercedes Narcisse, Crystal Hudson, Chi A. Ossé, Carmen N. De La Rosa, Eric Dinowitz, Alexa Avilés, Linda Lee, James F. Gennaro, Joann Ariola				
Indexes:					
Attachments:	1. Res. No. 172, 2. May 19, 2022 - Stated Meeting Agenda, 3. Hearing Transcript - Stated Meeting 5-19-22, 4. Minutes of the Stated Meeting - May 19, 2022, 5. Committee Report 6/30/22, 6. Hearing Testimony 6/30/22, 7. Hearing Transcript 6/30/22, 8. Committee Report 7/13/22, 9. Hearing Transcript 7/13/22, 10. Committee Report - Stated Meeting, 11. July 14, 2022 - Stated Meeting Agenda, 12. Hearing Transcript - Stated Meeting 7-14-22, 13. Minutes of the Stated Meeting - July 14, 2022				

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
5/19/2022	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
5/19/2022	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
6/30/2022	*	Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection	Hearing Held by Committee	
6/30/2022	*	Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection	Laid Over by Committee	
7/13/2022	*	Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection	Hearing Held by Committee	
7/13/2022	*	Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection	Approved by Committee	Pass
7/14/2022	*	City Council	Approved, by Council	Pass

Res. No. 172

Resolution calling on New York State to increase the number of Commissioners on the Public Service Commission and permit New York City to appoint two of its Commissioners

By Council Members Salamanca, Yeger, Nurse, Narcisse, Hudson, Ossé, De La Rosa, Dinowitz, Avilés, Lee, Gennaro and Ariola

Whereas, The New York Public Service Commission (PSC) regulates the State's electric, gas, steam, telecommunications and water utilities; and

powered by Legistar™

Whereas, The Commission also oversees the cable industry; and

Whereas, The Commission is housed within the Department of Public Service (DPS) and the Chair, designated by the Governor, also serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Department; and

Whereas, There may be up to seven commissioners on the PSC, all of which are appointed by the governor and approved by the state Senate; and

Whereas, A full term for a commissioner is six years; and

Whereas, A key responsibility of the PSC is approving rate increases, proposed by the various utility companies, and ensuring that New Yorkers are receiving adequate service; and

Whereas, In New York City, Consolidated Edison (Con Ed) holds a virtual monopoly over the electricity market, serving all parts of New York City (except for Rockaway, Queens), and Westchester County; and

Whereas, Although there are alternative electricity suppliers, all of these Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) still rely on existing utilities' infrastructure to deliver the electricity; and

Whereas, Therefore, most New York City residents are at the mercy of Con Ed's billing practices; and

Whereas, The PSC exists to offer some protection to consumers - being a check on superfluous rate increases and ensuring a consistent and reliable delivery of utilities; and

Whereas, However, over the past few years, the PSC has approved rate increases for Con Ed, and New Yorkers have had their electricity bills soar; and

Whereas, This is despite the fact that New York City residents have experienced numerous blackouts and decreased services, even during searing heatwaves; and

Whereas, In fact, while investigating Con Ed's preparation for tropical Storm Isaias and its ability to restore power after the storm hit, the DPS threatened to revoke its franchise; and

Whereas, In 2018, meanwhile, DPS reached a settlement agreement with Con Ed for $9.5 million, after numerous violations were issued to Con Ed due to its failure to adequately prepare for winter storms earlier that year; and

powered by Legistar™

Whereas, Despite these demonstrated failures in service, the PSC continues to approve rate increases; and

Whereas, According to advocates such as Susan Lerner from Common Cause NY, the PSC Commissioners are typically plucked from private industry and are more concerned with industry profit than consumer wellbeing; and

Whereas, Furthermore, unlike other states, New York's PSC does not require the body to include a member representing consumers; and

Whereas, New York City should be permitted to appoint at least two members to the board who represent the interests of our City's consumers; and

Whereas, The City's appointments should be made by the Mayor with the approval of the New York City Council; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the city of New York calls on New York State to increase the number of Commissioners on the Public Service Commission and permit New York City to appoint two of its Commissioners.

LMS
LS #8047
4/15/2022

powered by Legistar™