



## Board of Chosen Freeholders

County of Hunterdon  
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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: August 19, 2020

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## Hunterdon Freeholders Support Bill Requiring Utilities To Reimburse Residents Losses From Power Outages

Hunterdon County's Freeholders, at the August 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, approved a resolution supporting Senator Kip Bateman's legislation, S-2836, that requires an electric power utility to reimburse residential customers for the cost of food and prescription medicine spoiled or compromised due to a prolonged power outage.

Freeholder John E. Lanza, in sponsoring the resolution, said, "I have heard from a number of residents with regard to the lost food and medicines when their power was out for a prolonged period of time during the recent tropical storm. Senator Bateman and I discussed the issue and he proposed legislation last Thursday, which would require utilities to reimburse residential customers for the cost of losses.

This is a piece of legislation that I believe this Board should get behind and we should encourage other Freeholder Boards across the state to support it."

The Freeholder Resolution states that power utilities need a financial consequence for not meeting the expectations of their customers and to fully appreciate the financial loss that residents' shoulder from prolonged and sustained power outages.

Freeholder Director Shaun C. Van Doren said, "I am grateful to Freeholder Lanza for pursuing, with Senator Bateman, the issue of the monetary losses suffered by residents when the power is out."

Van Doren continued, "PSE&G has demonstrated responsibility by stating the company will voluntarily reimburse their customers because of the 'unique combination of circumstances.' If JCP&L will not follow suit, at the very least, pending approval of legislation, the NJBPU should order the company to reimburse ratepayers for losses."

County Administrator Kevin P. Davis noted the bill has been referred to the Senate Economic Growth Committee and Senator Holzapfel from Ocean County has joined Senator Bateman in sponsorship.