

Western Queens Power for the People Campaign

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GROUNDBREAKING \$63 MILLION JOINT PROPOSAL IN STATE CASE AGAINST CON ED FOR JULY 2006 QUEENS POWER OUTAGE

Includes \$17 million in Con Edison stockholder funds for refunds to affected customers, tree planting and other greening projects in affected neighborhoods, an economic and public health impact study and prevents Con Ed from passing on \$46 million in outage-related costs to ratepayers.

Consistent pressure for nearly two years by the people of Western Queens helped bring about today's \$63 million dollar Joint Proposal in the state case against Con Edison for the July 2006 Queens power outage. The proposal, which must be approved by the NYS Public Service Commission, calls for \$17 million in Con Ed stockholder funds to go to Queens communities directly affected by the 10-day outage. It also prevents Con Ed from passing along \$46 million in outage-related capital and other costs to all ratepayers.

About half of the \$17 million in stockholder funds will pay for refund credits on affected customers' Con Ed bills. The other half will pay for street trees and other greening projects. The most striking concession won by the settlement is that Con Edison agreed to allow a portion of the funds to pay for a study to assess the economic and public health costs of damages sustained by the affected communities. Results of the study could be used to improve how customers are compensated in future outages. Con Ed will also print an apology for the Queens outage on customers' bills the same month that the refund credits appear on customer bills. The apology will be in Spanish on Spanish language bills.

"Western Queens Power for the People Campaign still firmly believes that Con Edison's negligence caused the power outage and that our community's suffering was needless. Today's settlement doesn't change that," said Alyssa Bonilla from the Western Queens Power for the People Campaign, a grassroots group formed during the outage that served as a community voice in the state investigation, prudence proceeding and subsequent settlement discussions. "We agreed to this proposal because it is the best possible outcome for the community given the inadequacy of the existing laws. Western Queens community volunteers have worked hard for almost two years, along with a number of public officials, to get the best possible result."

"Western Queens Power for the People Campaign understands better than anyone that this settlement does not come close to compensating the community for all its losses," said Ms. Bonilla. "But it will put money directly into the pockets of residents, many of whom are struggling, and it will help green sections of Queens that have some of the lowest rates of open space in the entire city. We hope the laws will be changed so that in the future other communities do not have to suffer like we did. It just may be that the time of the privately owned utility company has seen its day."

The Joint Proposal was filed on April 24, 2008 with the New York State Public Service Commission. After submission of support statements, an administrative hearing, a public statement hearing and a comment period, which may generate additional ideas for area greening projects, the proposal must then go to the full NYS PSC for approval before provisions of the proposal are implemented.

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The Western Queens Power for the People Campaign (PFP) was launched in July 2006 during the 10-day Con Ed power outage by people who live and work in the outage-affected communities of Sunnyside, Woodside, Astoria and Long Island City. PFP volunteers have petitioned; held public meetings; organized and participated in community marches; spoken at public hearings; and written letters to the editor. PFP has acted as a community voice in the state investigation of the July 2006 Queens Power Outage, subsequent prudence proceedings and settlement talks, to fight for justice, an economic-and-public-health impact study and restitution for the outage. PFP also picketed Con Ed headquarters, and spoke at public hearings in opposition to Con Ed's rate increase.

Please visit: www.dps.state.ny.us to view all documents related to cases 06-E-0894, 06-M-1108, 06-M-1078 & 06-E-1158.