



NEWS FROM
ULSTER COUNTY
County Executive Jen Metzger

*****For Immediate Release*****

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County Executive Jen Metzger and Elected Officials Unite in Call to Hold Central Hudson Accountable

**COUNTY EXECUTIVE METZGER PENS JOINT LETTER TO STATE REGULATORS
REQUESTING ACTION ON CIVIL PENALTIES**

KINGSTON, NY - Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger has called on the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) to take action and move forward with the prudence review and penalty measures before issuing an Order on the current rate case. A letter penned by the County Executive was filed with the Department of Public Service yesterday, and included a long list of Federal, State, County, and local elected officials as co-signers: Congressman Pat Ryan (D-18), State Senator Michelle Hinchey (D-41), Assemblymember Sarahana Shrestha (D-103); Chair Peter Criswell (D-7), Majority Leader Abe Uchitelle (D-5) and Minority Leader Kevin Roberts (D-12) of the Ulster County Legislature, and Legislators Aaron Levine (D-1), Jeff Collins (D-23), Megan Sperry (D-17), Limina Grace-Harmon (D-20), Debra Clinton (D-16), Joe Donaldson (D-8), Eric Stewart (D-18), Thomas Corcoran (D-11), Kathy Nolan (D-22), Gina Hansut (D-10) and Richard T. Walls (D-13); City of Kingston Mayor Steve Noble, Hurley Town Supervisor Mike Boms, Gardiner Town Supervisor Marybeth Majestic, Village of New Paltz Mayor Tim Rogers, Town of New Paltz Mayor Neil Bettez, Rosendale Supervisor Jeanne Walsh, Town of Esopus Supervisor Danielle Freer, Town of Lloyd Supervisor David Palvchak, and Town of Marlborough Supervisor Scott Corcoran.

“While important steps have been taken by the Commission following DPS’s December 2022 Investigation Report of the Fortis/Central Hudson billing fiasco, including ending the utility’s use of estimated billing and installing an Independent Monitor to verify the correction of

billing errors, Fortis/Central Hudson has yet to be held to account for management's reckless actions," **said Ulster County Executive Metzger.** "A prudence review and civil penalty assessment should be undertaken now, before the PSC approves a new rate plan, to justly compensate customers and give us the confidence that management failures of this magnitude will not be tolerated and will not be repeated in the future."

"From day one I've been fighting to hold Central Hudson accountable," **said Congressman Pat Ryan.** "It's outrageous that Central Hudson is seeking to raise rates without facing real consequences for its failures. I'm proud to join with County Executive Jen Metzger in calling for a prudence review and civil penalty assessment – strong steps in holding Central Hudson responsible for the egregious mismanagement that resulted in the harm of countless Hudson Valley families. I will keep pushing to ensure that every Central Hudson customer that was wronged is made whole before any rate increase is even considered."

"Hudson Valley residents are still calling my office today for help dealing with the fallout from Central Hudson's billing mistakes and bad business decisions," **said State Senator Michelle Hinchey.** "Central Hudson made a mess with its billing system, and they – and they alone – should be responsible for cleaning up that mess, restoring trust, and paying back Hudson Valley customers for the economic and emotional hardships they've caused. We thank the PSC for its thorough investigation into the company and urge for a Prudence Review and civil penalty assessment to hold Central Hudson accountable."

"Central Hudson is actively under investigation for large scale billing errors that affected thousands of ratepayers, many of whom are our constituents," **said Assemblymember Sarahana Shrestha.** "During this investigation and in the months of scrutiny leading up to it, Central Hudson has not demonstrated the ability to adequately stabilize its operations, including the hiring and training of staff to provide satisfactory customer service that is needed to alleviate the anxiety and stress of our constituents. Given that questions persist around billing issues, and the determinations of the ongoing investigation are unlikely to be known soon, the PSC should deny rate increases to Central Hudson."

"As elected officials, it is our duty to hold companies accountable for their actions, especially when those actions directly impact the well-being of our constituents," **said Peter Criswell, Chair, Ulster County Legislature.** "The failures of Fortis/Central Hudson in implementing their billing system cannot go unaddressed."

The full letter is posted under public comment on the New York State Department of Public Service website for the following matters - Case 22-M-0645 | Cases 23-E-0418/23-G-0419, and can be viewed [HERE](#)

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