

Lawmakers Lash Out At Con Ed Following Season's 1st Blackout

BY JOHN TOSCANO

Queens lawmakers were quick to react to this summer's first Con Ed power outage last week, expressing concern that the giant utility is still not capable of preventing other system failures.

Assemblymember Michael Gianaris blasted



Left to right: Congressman Carolyn Maloney, Assemblymember John Gianaris, City Councilmembers Peter Vallone, Jr. and John Liu.

understand that problems could occur."

As he did during the protracted blackout in Astoria, Long Island City, Woodside and Elmhurst last August, Mayor Michael Bloomberg expressed support for Con Ed and

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Middle Village), whose district also fell victim to a powerful storm that caused brief outages, stated there was grave concern in his area that the power failures might be forming a pattern.

Despite all the harsh criticism, Con Ed's chief executive, Kevin Burke, a veteran in dealing with these blackouts, declared: "The customers have a lot of confidence in us...they

the power supplier as an "unreliable, unaccountable monopoly", Councilmember Peter Vallone charged "the same negligent, arrogant people" are running the company and Congressman Carolyn Maloney saw the blackout as "an ominous sign for the rest of the summer".

Joining the three Astoria representatives, City Councilmember John Liu declared his constituents in Flushing, who had a brief blackout Friday night, "dread a repeat of last year's extreme outage in Western Queens".

Councilmember Dennis Gallagher (R-C,

UCCA 'Lights Out' Offer Remains

BY LIZ GOFF

When the lights went out, and back on in 48 minutes in parts of The Bronx and Manhattan last week, United Community Civic Association President Rose Marie Poveromo recalled an offer she made to Con Edison CEO Kevin Burke during the well-remembered 2006 blackout—an offer she stands by.

"It's an offer I hope I never have to pay," Poveromo said. "But if the lights go out in

Astoria again this summer, I want Kevin Burke to spend a few days and nights at my family home."

Poveromo originally made the offer to Burke while she and her neighbors were sweating it out through a sweltering 2006 heat wave for eight days without fans, air conditioners, refrigerators—or anything cold. "Of course he never responded," she said.

Burke, along with Mayor Michael

Bloomberg were two of the New Yorkers who lost power during last week's 48-minute blackout, a Bloomberg spokesperson said.

"Isn't it amazing how Con Ed was able to get power back to Kevin Burke in under an hour, when it took them nearly two weeks to restore our power?" Poveromo commented. "We live in Con Ed's backyard. We live next door to all the power plants, but they couldn't

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