

Senator Mark Spencer
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Committees:
Homeland Security and Transportation, RMM
Public Policy, RMM
Veterans Affairs and the Military, RMM
Commerce and Technology
Agriculture
Natural Resources
Utilities

August 24, 2026

Governor Mike Braun
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Governor Braun,

We appreciate your shared concern regarding NIPSCO's failed response to the recent devastating storm that hit Northwest Indiana, and subsequent call for a thorough review of NIPSCO's preparation for and response to the prolonged power outages caused by the catastrophic derecho that brought 99-mile-per-hour wind gusts as well as both an EF-1 and an EF-2 tornado to the region.

As you know, in June of 2025, the IURC approved a rate increase that raised the average family's monthly utility bill by [\\$34.74](#), despite NIPSCO customers already paying the highest electric bills in Indiana. In NIPSCO's justification for the increase, they cited continued investment to the electric grid to improve reliability and reduce outage durations.

Yet, when Northwest Indiana had been promised and charged more, we were left in the dark. We find it unacceptable that many of our constituents, already facing Indiana's highest electric bills, have endured extraordinarily prolonged outages and inadequate communication regarding restoration.

We share the belief that NIPSCO must answer why our constituents have been without power for nearly two-weeks with wholly unsatisfactory updates from the company throughout that time. As extreme weather becomes more common in our state, it is a matter of when, not if, our infrastructure will be tested again. The people of Northwest Indiana cannot afford the same response when that day comes.

To provide the most comprehensive relief to Hoosiers and ensure this doesn't happen again, we have additional requests of NIPSCO in addition to reviewing whether *the utility adequately maintained vegetation and cleared rights-of-way to protect its infrastructure and whether funding approved by state regulators for infrastructure and reliability improvements was spent as promised*. We ask that you direct NIPSCO to provide a comprehensive customer-relief plan, including automatic refunds or bill credits for any improper or inaccurate charges during the outage, immediate appropriate adjustments for customers enrolled in budget billing or a clear process for compensating ratepayers affected by prolonged service failures.

We also ask that you call on the IURC to require NIPSCO to present quarterly presentations, in person, to the Commission moving forward to show how they are using the rate increase to improve their infrastructure to withstand such storms in the future.

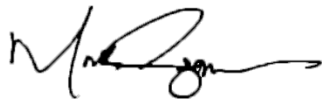
State policy dictates that our electric service utility providers are granted privileges not extended to other organizations. With that comes incredible responsibility and a heightened level of accountability not just to the State of Indiana, but to their ratepayers who have no choice but to rely on them to keep the lights on. These past 13 days have highlighted the clear and present need for continued utility reform in our state.

We are formally requesting your collaboration this session in advocating for policy that protects and empowers consumers, ensures transparency for policymakers and the public, holds utilities to the highest possible accountability standards, and requires proof of comprehensive "catastrophe" planning.

Before we conclude, we would like to also extend our deepest thanks to the men and women who worked tirelessly on the ground to restore power. Our concerns regarding NIPSCO's management and response are in no way a reflection of the line workers' dedication to serving their communities.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Mark Spencer
Indiana State Senate
Senate District 3



Rodney Pol Jr.
Minority Caucus Chair
Indiana Senate
District 4



Lonnie Randolph
Indiana Senate
District 2



David Niezgodski
Indiana Senate
District 10