

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 16

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1996 SESSION

By Assemblyman ROONEY

1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** memorializing the Board of Regulatory
2 Commissioners to investigate the Rockland Electric Company for
3 wrongdoing and to oversee the acquisition of Rockland Electric Company
4 property by another utility.
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6 **WHEREAS**, Orange and Rockland Utilities, which is the parent company of the
7 Rockland Electric Company, is under investigation in New York by the
8 Rockland County District Attorney and by the New York Public Service
9 Commission for alleged illegal contributions to a political campaign; and
10 **WHEREAS**, A senior official of Orange and Rockland Utilities and the treasurer
11 of a political campaign in Rockland County, New York, have both been
12 arrested in connection with the alleged illegal contributions; and
13 **WHEREAS**, Ratepayers' money may have been used in these illegal activities;
14 and
15 **WHEREAS**, The public utilities of New Jersey are granted monopolistic
16 privileges only to facilitate efficient provision of services to ratepayers, and
17 they are specifically forbidden by R.S. 48:3-4 from making or giving,
18 directly or indirectly, an undue or unreasonable preference or advantage
19 to any person; and
20 **WHEREAS**, The Board of Regulatory Commissioners is charged with the
21 general supervision and regulation of and jurisdiction and control over all
22 public utilities, and may approve a public utility privilege or franchise only
23 upon a determination that the privilege or franchise is necessary and proper
24 for the public convenience and properly conserves the public interests; and
25 **WHEREAS**, The Rockland Electric Company charges the highest overall rates
26 of any public utility in the State for the provision of electricity, and these
27 high rates may be caused in part by the corruption which is currently being
28 investigated; and
29 **WHEREAS**, There are other public utilities in the State with the financial and
30 technical ability to purchase and operate the Rockland Electric Company
31 transmission and distribution facilities; now, therefore,
32 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:
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1 buy out the company or to allow municipalities in its service area to choose
2 another utility.

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7 Memorializes BRC investigation of Rockland Electric and of possible
8 acquisition of Rockland Electric property by another utility.