

For Immediate Release Thursday, March 16, 2023

## ATTORNEY GENERAL JAMES AND COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO RESPOND TO REPORT OF FALSE RG&E CUSTOMER SERVICE PHONE NUMBER

AG James and CE Bello alert NYers to correct contact information for RG&E; AG James to conduct inquiry into how a false TTY number was provided to utility customers

**ROCHESTER, NY** — New York Attorney General Letitia James and County Executive Adam Bello today warned New Yorkers to be vigilant following a troubling News 10 NBC report that revealed a false toll-free TTY customer service phone number printed on Rochester Gas & Electric (RG&E) bills is giving scammers an opportunity to commit financial fraud. Attorney General James is conducting an inquiry into the matter, seeking to determine how a fraudulent number was sent to RG&E customers. Attorney General James and County Executive Bello advised New Yorkers who suspect that they are the victim of a scam to report it to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) by <u>submitting a complaint online</u> or calling 800-771-7755.

"New Yorkers shouldn't be exposed to scams from trusted utility providers, and my office is very seriously reviewing these allegations," said **Attorney General James**. "I encourage any New Yorker who was exposed to this fraud to contact my office. We appreciate County Executive Adam Bello working with our office on this matter."

"It is clear from the News 10 NBC investigation that Monroe County residents have been exposed to potentially fraudulent and costly activity," said County Executive Bello. "This morning, I called Attorney General James and am grateful that she is reviewing this situation to ensure our residents are protected. I also spoke with the CEO of RG&E to express my outrage that such a number was allowed to remain on customers' bills. Customers of RG&E deserve better, and I appreciate the Attorney General for her support in getting to the bottom of this."

According to the <u>News 10 NBC report</u>, individuals who called the false TTY number seeking assistance with billing issues were told those issues would be resolved if they provided their banking information to allow for direct deposit of a refund. After providing that information, the individuals discovered numerous fraudulent charges made to their checking accounts.

The fraudulent number is still listed on the most recent RG&E bills. The company asks any customers who require use of a TTY line dial 711 for assistance.

## Media inquiries:

Gary Walker, Director of Communications

GaryWalker@MonroeCounty.gov

(585) 753-1064

Meaghan M. McDermott, Deputy Director of Communications

MeaghanMcDermott@MonroeCounty.gov (585) 469-4365