



March 19, 2026

Mayor Edie Dondero
Town of South Bethany
402 Evergreen Road
South Bethany, DE 19930

Dear Mayor Dondero,

I am writing on behalf of Delmarva Power to address the concerns you raised in an op-ed regarding our response to Winter Storm Hernando, which significantly affected South Bethany and communities across Sussex County. I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you in person during the storm as our teams worked to restore service, and I value the longstanding partnership between Delmarva Power and the Town of South Bethany. It is important to us that you have a clear understanding of the extensive preparation and coordinated efforts undertaken before, during, and after this unprecedented event.

In the days leading up to the blizzard, we activated our emergency operations protocols, pre staged crews across the service area, and brought in additional personnel and equipment to ensure rapid deployment once conditions allowed. We also maintained continuous communication with state and local emergency management officials, including an onsite presence at the Delaware Emergency Management Agency and the Sussex County Emergency Operations Center, to ensure alignment on safety priorities and community needs.

The severity of this storm created extraordinary challenges - sustained high winds, heavy snowfall, widespread tree damage, and dangerous travel conditions all limited safe access to certain areas. Despite these obstacles, our crews worked in extremely hazardous conditions to restore service as quickly and safely as possible, and we appreciate your acknowledgment of their efforts in your op ed.

Safety is one of our core values, and it guides every decision we make during extreme weather events. Protecting our employees, our customers, and the community remains our highest priority.

We also continue to invest heavily in grid modernization and storm hardening initiatives to reduce the frequency and duration of outages. Over the last several years, Delmarva Power has invested \$480 million in critical infrastructure to improve system performance, enhance resiliency, and strengthen service reliability. As a result of these efforts, customers across Delaware have experienced a 47 percent decrease in outages over the past decade.

At the same time, we recognize that communication - particularly around estimated times of restoration (ETR) - is essential during a major storm. Extreme weather can make it difficult to provide precise estimates early in the restoration process, and we understand how frustrating changing ETRs can be for residents, businesses, and local officials. One of the challenges

during this storm was that the electrical system was still experiencing new damage while crews were assessing existing outages and restoring service. When we reconfigure the grid to reroute electricity and restore customers more quickly, the system can behave differently than under normal conditions, which can cause ETRs to shift. We recognize the impact this has on customers, and improving this process is one of our key action items following the storm.

For additional information on outage readiness, the restoration process, and preparedness guidance, I invite you to visit the outage preparation section of our website:

<https://secure.delmarva.com/powerOutages/outageTracker/preparingForAnOutage>

Delmarva Power values its relationship with the Town of South Bethany and all municipalities in our service territory. We welcome continued dialogue and collaboration as we work together to strengthen preparedness and ensure reliable service, even in the face of historic weather events. Thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to provide this clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jim Smith
External Affairs Manager
Delmarva Power