



**Via Electronic Filing**

February 16, 2021

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Re: **Public Utility Service Termination Moratorium –  
Modification of March 13<sup>th</sup> Emergency Order  
PUC Docket No: M-2020-3019244**

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Enclosed please find Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc.'s Comments to the Pennsylvania Public Commission's October 13, 2020 Order in the above docket

Sincerely,

*Mary McFall Hopper*

Mary McFall Hopper  
Regulatory Counsel  
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Enclosure

**BEFORE THE  
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Public Utility Service Termination Moratorium  
Modification of March 13<sup>th</sup> Emergency Order

Docket No. M-2020-3019244

**COMMENTS OF AQUA PENNSYLVANIA, INC.**

Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc. (“Aqua” or the “Company”) respectfully submits the following Comments to the Pennsylvania Public Commission’s (“Commission”) October 13, 2020 Order (“October 13<sup>th</sup> Order”) in the above docket. The October 13<sup>th</sup> Order requested parties to submit comments and proposals regarding the protections contained in the October 13<sup>th</sup> Order. On August 18, 2020 Aqua submitted comments in the above docket and the Company incorporates its previous comments herein.

The Company supports the comments filed by the Energy Association of Pennsylvania (EAPA). Although the EAPA comments are directed toward the electric and gas industry, the comments also apply to the issues experienced by Aqua.

The Company agrees with EAPA that the Commission should end the termination restrictions outlined in the October 13<sup>th</sup> Order. The prohibition of termination of utility service, including the partial lift of the prohibition in the October 13<sup>th</sup> Order, is leading to the accumulation of arrearages for a large number of utility customers and the continuation of the provisions in the October 13<sup>th</sup> Order will further increase the difficulty customers will have in paying these balances. As discussed in the Company’s August 18<sup>th</sup> comments in this docket the Company has utilized a number of ways to communicate with customers to alert them of their

accumulating balances and let them know that assistance is available to help pay their bills. The Company sent payment reminder letters and emails, left door hangers, communicated on social media channels, sent Helping Hand information in bill inserts and proactively made telephone calls. The Company agrees that it is extremely important to encourage its customers to contact the Company to discuss their account, determine the best way to handle paying their Aqua bill and provide help either with enrollment in Helping Hand, application of an assistance grant or setting up a payment arrangement. The Company will continue its communication efforts to customers but it submits that the Commission should allow full collection to proceed beginning on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Commission's existing Chapter 56 regulations provide protections to customers and those protections will continue after the expiration of the October 13<sup>th</sup> Order. The Commission's existing regulations provide for protections and require all collection notices include information alerting the customer to contact the Company to make appropriate payment arrangements and informing the customer has the option of contacting the Commission to file a dispute. The Company understands that there are customers who are experiencing financial problems as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and it remains committed to assisting customers including continuing its enhanced low-income assistance program and grant program.

For the reasons explained above, and those advocated by EAPA, the Company respectfully requests that the Commission adopt an Order restoring the collections process, including terminations, authorized under the Public Utility Code and the Commission's regulations effective April 1, 2021 for all classes of customers.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mary McFall Hopper*

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Dated: February 16, 2021