

12 July 2024

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Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Post Office Box 3265  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265

RE: Proposed Aqua Acquisition and Rate Base Addition (Docket No. A-2023-3041695) and Original Tariff Water PA P.U.C. No. 4

Dear Sirs:


I am writing to oppose the referenced requests by Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc. (Aqua) to add the Grenville Sanitary Authority (GSA) wastewater system assets to its rate base and for a general rate increase. Aqua provides monopoly water services in my township (East Goshen). As such, I have no choice in my source of a regulated, water utility.

If Aqua wants to purchase wastewater assets in Mercer County that have no impact on my Chester County water system, thus expanding the corporation, they should not impact existing customers' water rates. Essential Utilities, Inc. (Aqua's parent) shareholders (I am one) should be the ones to fund purchases that will expand the corporation's assets. Corporate expansion into a different utility (wastewater) should not impact my regulated, monopoly water utility rates, with no concurrent improvements to my regulated, monopoly water service. What improvements will I see in my water service for this proposed increased rate?

**Corporate expansion should be existing customer rate neutral (or result in reduced rates),** as additional assets should allow for lower administrative/overhead rates (additional assets to spread administrative, overhead, etc. charges onto). Paying too much for an asset also means other assets have to provide more of a return to make up for the lower return on an overpriced asset. Why does monopoly Aqua need more revenue from its existing customers to expand?

Aqua is also requesting a general rate increase as they report that their costs are increasing. Aqua last received a rate increase in Chester County of 11.7% in December 2022. Now Aqua wants a 24% rate increase (their May 2024 letter), not even two years later. If the reasons stated in their letter are part of the justification for the rate increase, then the DISC charge on water bills should be eliminated. Inflation has not been that high in the past few years to warrant an increase of greater than 35% in just two years. What percent rate of return are they asking for? It seems that all Aqua likes to do (and is good at) is purchase systems and ask for rate increases – they do not do a good job in protecting their system from floods.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  


Walter Wujcik  
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West Chester, PA 19380

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