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July 1, 2024

Secretary Rosemary Chiavetta
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Secretary's Bureau
400 North St.
Harrisburg, PA 17120

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R-2024-3047822
R-2024-3047824

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

I am writing to express my opposition to AQUA Pennsylvania's request to increase water and wastewater rates.

Many who live and work in Chester County are concerned about the financial hardships the proposed rate increases would create. Granting AQUA PA's request to increase both water and wastewater rates by nearly 20% would place undue burden on our communities, hurting households and businesses alike.

Balancing the need for infrastructure upgrades with affordable water services is a primary concern. However, it is clear these rate increases are excessive. Given the net income of Essential Utilities grew 7% in 2023, Aqua PA's parent company appears profitable and financially stable. Further, customer bills now include distribution system improvement charges, such that funds are already allocated for the infrastructure updates.

Moreover, since this would be AQUA PA's second water rate hike since 2022, this additional increase is not in the public's interest. The proposed rate would likely result in these impacts on the community *per month*—residential customers would pay \$18 more, commercial customers would pay \$122 more, and industrial customers would pay \$609 more. *In a year's time*, this would cost residential customers \$216 more, commercial customers \$1,464 more, and industrial customers \$7,308 more.

The overwhelming constituent feedback highlights the detrimental impact these proposed rate hikes would have on financial stability and overall quality of life, as many families already struggle to make ends meet. Small businesses, the backbone of our local economy, would face heightened operational costs, potentially leading to reduced services, increased consumer costs, or even closures. Larger industrial customers, who provide essential jobs and economic stability, would also be adversely affected, potentially resulting in decreased investments in our region.

Due to these significant concerns, I respectfully urge the Public Utility Commission to reject AQUA PA's request to increase water and wastewater rates. It is imperative that we find a more balanced solution that addresses infrastructure needs without undue financial burden on our communities.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Pielli".

Chris Pielli
State Representative
156th Legislative District

CP/jm