



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Todd Kaminsky

Senators Kaminsky, Brooks and Gaughran Oppose New York American Water Rate Hike

TODD KAMINSKY August 18, 2020

(Rockville Centre, New York) -- Today, Senator Todd Kaminsky, Senator John Brooks and Senator Jim Gaughran wrote to the leadership of New York American Water in strong opposition to the planned rate hike implementation on September 1st.

With the State of New York in the midst of a pandemic and economic turmoil, the Long Island Senators joined to oppose the planned rate hike implementation. The Senators argue that it is inappropriate and insensitive to raise rates on struggling Long Islanders, especially when water rates are already sky-high.

The full letter to New York American Water President Lynda DiMenna can be read below:

Dear President DiMenna,

We are writing in opposition to New York American Water's ("NYAW") implementation of its September 1st rate hike. With our state in the midst of a pandemic and economic turmoil, it would be inappropriate and insensitive to raise rates on struggling Long Islanders, especially when water rates are already sky-high.

The current proposed rate increase was originally scheduled to be implemented on April 1, 2020. At that time, the rate hike was delayed due to the unprecedented public health and economic crises with which our State was confronted. While New York has made strides in protecting public health in the months since, the fact remains that many Long Islanders have trouble making ends meet. According to the most recent available data, the State's unemployment rate is 15.7%. This represents a drastic increase from the unemployment rate of 3.7% that the State recorded in February 2020. Further, while many businesses reopened following quarantine measures, many remain unable to do so. These and other leading economic indicators all point to the same conclusion; this crisis is far from over, and people are struggling. This fact is unchanged from when NYAW agreed to delay its April 1 rate hike.

For these reasons, raising prices on an essential resource like water is unfathomable now. When Long Islanders are hurting it is our job to help them, not compound their problems. Ratepayers can barely afford the seasonal price of water as-is, and you should not place an additional burden on them. Please take swift action to help customers by delaying your company's rate increase. I thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Todd Kaminsky, Senator, 9th District

John Brooks, Senator, 8th District

James Gaughran, Senator, 5th District

CC: John Rhodes, Chair, Public Service Commission

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