

Steven Liang

From: Jocelyn S
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 5:20 PM
To: WaterRateBoard
Subject: Don't raise rates in a pandemic

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To the PWD Rate Board:

As we pass the one year anniversary of the COVID pandemic with millions still out of work, the virus still spreading, and our city struggling to effectively administer vaccines, I urge you not to add to the burden of Philadelphians' suffering by raising water rates.

[Recent research has shown](#) that water shutoffs have exacerbated COVID deaths across the county. In a pandemic where hand-washing is essential to curbing disease spread, water access is a matter of life and death. And while a shutoff moratorium is currently in place for Philadelphians until April, whenever that expires, many people will likely be facing water shutoffs or struggling with outstanding bills. A 17.5% rate hike now would impact the residents who are already struggling the most, and even more people would be at risk of having their water access cut off or even losing their homes over unaffordable water bills.

I am proud that our city has a strong public water system. Of course we must prioritize necessary repairs and maintenance to our water infrastructure—but these funds must come from the state or federal level or from cuts elsewhere in the city budget, not with raising rates for water consumers during a public health crisis.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn