
Rate increases

From Shannon Ward
Date Fri 4/18/2025 8:48 AM
To WaterRateBoard <waterrateboard@Phila.gov>

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Dear Philadelphia Water Rate Board,

My name is Shannon Ward, and I'm writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed water rate increase. I currently work as a Constituent Services Advisor for the state House, and I previously served in a similar role for Representative Donna Bullock, working directly with residents in Strawberry Mansion, Sharswood, and Brewerytown. In both positions I've seen firsthand how devastating any increase in household expenses can be for our most vulnerable neighbors.

The people I've assisted through the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program are overwhelmingly older adults and individuals with disabilities living on fixed incomes. The vast majority had annual incomes of just \$10,968, the minimum Social Security Disability benefit as of last year, which breaks down to \$914 per month. An 18% increase in water bills is simply not sustainable under these conditions.

Philadelphia is already the poorest big city in America. Our residents are not just struggling, many are in survival mode. This increase will only deepen poverty and push more families closer to crisis. People will be forced to make impossible choices between water, food, medication, and other essentials; and some won't survive that.

I urge you to reconsider this proposed rate hike and explore more equitable alternatives that don't harm the most economically vulnerable in our city.

Thank you,

Shannon E. Ward

