



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senator Fuschillo: Psc Wrong to Approve Aqua Rate Increase

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. January 20, 2010

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“As a State Senator representing many communities in the Aqua service area, and as an Aqua customer myself, I am appalled that the State’s Public Service Commission (PSC) has approved a double digit Aqua rate increase which will result in higher water bills for Aqua customers.

Over 3,000 local residents joined me in urging the PSC to oppose an Aqua rate increase. I and many others questioned the need for an increase at all when Aqua’s parent company posted record profits in the worst economic climate since the great depression. We urged the PSC to make Aqua focus on its customers rather than its shareholders and corporate executives.

Despite this tremendous opposition from the community, the PSC still chose to grant Aqua a double digit rate increase. The plan adopted by the PSC hardly addresses any of the concerns raised by Aqua ratepayers, who were already paying significantly more for their water than those in the surrounding communities. Because of the PSC’s actions, the average Aqua customer will see their annual bill rise by 9.14 percent this year, 1.57 percent next year, and 1.95 percent in 2012.

In addition, local fire districts will also incur higher costs because the plan raises hydrant rental rates. Ratepayers will again be forced to pay more, this time absorbing the costs through their fire district taxes. The Towns of Hempstead and Oyster Bay have begun to examine whether a public takeover of Aqua would save money for local ratepayers. I applaud them for taking this step. Aqua’s rates are drowning us and we can’t afford it anymore.”

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