



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Carl L. Marcellino

## MARCELLINO INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO PROTECT AMERICAN WATER CUSTOMERS

CARL L. MARCELLINO September 8, 2017



Senator Carl L. Marcellino, announced today that he has introduced two bills to address the dramatically high water bill spikes that have affected customers of New York American Water on Long Island.

“More than 100,000 Long Island customers have been shocked when they opened their water bills from American Water. Some residents have seen their rates more than double. The public outcry has been loud and justified. Yet, American Water is unwilling to take any

steps to reduce this burden on their consumers,” said Senator Marcellino.

The first bill will allow a taxpayer serviced by a private water utility to take a credit against their state tax equal to the amount of such taxpayer’s annual water bill ascribable to property taxes paid by their private water utility. The second bill would require the state comptroller to conduct audits of private water utility companies prior to and after rate changes are approved by the public service commission.

In May 2017, the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) granted New York American Water a rate increase for the next four consecutive years. These increases range from 1 percent to as high as 9.6 percent.

“The combination of a draconian rate increase and the practice of passing the companies taxes on to the backs of their ratepayers has created a dramatic financial burden in water bills. Add to that the lack of accountability by American water and you have a situation where people feel betrayed and helpless,” added Senator Marcellino.

New York American Water is a private company that services 120,000 households and businesses in Nassau County. Unlike public water utilities in New York State, American Water pays property taxes and passes that expense to their customers in their water bills.

“Residents have no choice in their water provider and deserve to receive the same benefits that customers of municipally owned water districts enjoy. These bills will provide some financial relief and insure that our State Comptroller audits these private water companies before and after a rate increase is approved,” concluded Senator Marcellino.