



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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*Peter F. Neronha*  
*Attorney General*

February 1, 2021

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr., Chairman  
Rhode Island House of Representatives Committee on Corporations  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: H 5030

Dear Chairman Solomon,

I write today to suggest amendments to H 5030, a resolution requesting review of increased water charges recently issued by the Kent County Water Authority.

We share your concern that whenever consumers are issued utility bills containing charges that apparently significantly diverge from previously incurred charges, those consumers deserve, at a minimum, an explanation for the increase. Where that explanation is wanting, further investigation may be warranted.

We believe, however, that the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (“DPUC”) is the correct entity to carry out such an investigation in the first instance. The DPUC possesses the requisite expertise and authority to most efficiently and effectively collect information from the Water Authority and conduct this investigation. That is, after all, one of DPUC’s core responsibilities as the regulator of public utilities in this state. This Office would also be interested to learn of the results of this investigation as it would inform whether additional legal action may be appropriate.

Thus, we respectfully suggest that the Resolution request that the DPUC review this increase and report its findings to the House of Representatives as well as to this Office. As such, we suggest that the final two paragraphs of the resolution be amended as follows:

RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby respectfully requests the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers ~~Attorney General~~ to review the major increase in water charges by the Kent County Water Authority ~~and the Public Utilities Commission~~ and report back to the Rhode Island House of Representatives and to the Office of the Attorney General on or before June 1, 2021; and be it further

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RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Attorney General Peter F. Neronha [and to Ms. Linda D. George, Administrator of the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers.](#)

This process would ensure that the review is conducted by the appropriate governmental authority and preserve this Office's ability to take further action if such action is needed. I appreciate the Committee's consideration of the proposed amendment and am available to discuss this with you further if necessary.

Sincerely,



Peter F. Neronha  
Attorney General

CC: House Committee on Corporations  
Ms. Linda D. George, Administrator, Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers