



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

DIVISION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES & CARRIERS

Administration

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February 1, 2021

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon
Chairman - House Committee on Corporations
State House
Providence, R.I. 02903

Re: House Resolution 5030 Re: Kent County Water Authority

Dear Chairman Solomon and Members of the Committee,

While the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers ("Division") does not generally comment on legislative resolutions, I would like to provide testimony regarding the Division's ongoing review of the Kent County Water Authority (KCWA) billing complaints that we have received over the last several months. It is the Division (as opposed to the Commission) that investigates billing disputes against public utilities.

We were aware of an increase in KCWA billing issues from the onset and communicated with the utility and public officials who had contacted us. The Division employed regulatory procedures to address the billing complaints by investigating each individual case that was not previously resolved between KCWA and the customer. To date, there have been 131 billing complaints brought to, and addressed by, the Division. Of that total, 89 have been fully resolved; 42 are still pending additional review.

In conducting our investigations, the Division compared past summer consumption history, tracked usage, reviewed hourly meter data logs, verified final readings, verified bill calculations, and when necessary, conducted meter tests. Each customer was contacted to discuss their complaint. Complaints are closed when the Division concludes that the customer was billed correctly and the customer is satisfied with the Division's explanation. A customer who remains unsatisfied may request a formal evidentiary hearing before the Division. Of the 42 KCWA complaints still pending before the Division, 14 are awaiting meter tests, 15 require site visits, 7 are pending further Division investigation, and 6 customers have not responded to the Division's efforts to investigate their complaints.

Going forward, the Division will continue to work with KCWA to ensure transparency in the billing process.

Should the Committee need any further information about our review please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda George". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Linda George, Esq.
Administrator, RIDPUC

CC: Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations