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Case Mgmt
By _____

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MAY 22 2015

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
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Honorable Kristy Izzo, Secretary
Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue
10th Floor
P.O. Box 350
Trenton, NJ 08625

**Re: United Water
2015 Base Rate Filing**

Dear Honorable Kristy Izzo:

WR15020269

Please be advised that I represent the Township of Berkeley ("Township"). On behalf of the Township, I am writing to urge you to exercise extreme diligence regarding the most recent increase requested by United Water. A rate increase is disconcerting in the current economic environment, especially to a community still trying to rebuild from Super Storm Sandy, and the Township implores you to protect its (and similarly-affected) ratepayers from the impact of the water company's petition. The requested increase will cause an 18% increase to the average ratepayer's bill. Another sizable increase at this time is ill-conceived and potentially damaging to any economic recovery.

Not to mention, in 2008, the Board of Public Utilities ("BPU") approved a rate hike of 94% that was phased in over two years, 62% in 2008 and 32% in 2009. The BPU approved another rate increase of 19% or an increase of \$6.75 a month and then again in 2013, a rate increase of 12% or an increase of \$4.71 per month. This petition seeks to increase the ratepayers' bills by \$7.57 per month.

To seek another rate increase within a seven-year period, affecting a Township that, in many locations, is still struggling from the storm, is callous. Berkeley Township is a shore community that was greatly impacted by the storm and its citizens are slowly trying to rebuild their lives. Our citizens have limited means and a rate increase is not something they can afford.

Case Management
J. Kane
Water

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Page 2

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Board deny United Water's request. Any action other than a denial would be a great disservice to the Township's residents and ultimately cause them terrible financial strain.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lauren R. Staiger".

LAUREN R. STAIGER

For the Firm

lrs@gm-law.net