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October 11, 2011

Hon. Jaclyn A. Brillling
Secretary to the Commission
New York State Public Service Commission
Empire State Plaza
Agency Building 3
Albany, NY 12223-1350

Dear Secretary Brillling:

I write to you to express my strong opposition to the recently submitted request by Long Island American Water seeking approval of a \$9.4 million rate increase that will amount to an almost 20% rate hike for their ratepayers.

With the current state of the economy, a 20% increase is simply outrageous. Last year, in partnership with Governor Cuomo, the Senate acted under my leadership to institute a property tax cap in New York State. This action was taken to curtail excessive increases in local taxes that are driving New Yorkers out of this state. An increase of this magnitude defies the fundamental premise of a property tax cap while adding a significant burden to residents serviced by Long Island American Water.

Furthermore, while Long Island American Water may have taken recent steps to upgrade their infrastructure, their efforts have not resulted in an acceptable standard of water quality for many residents in my district. Issues of high iron content continue to plague residents of the five towns, including the Village of Lawrence, who have been forced to live with discolored brown water for years. This water, while seemingly safe, causes damage to hot water heaters and has forced many residents to purchase whole-home water filtration systems. To my knowledge, there is no immediate solution to effectively remedy this long-standing problem.

For the reasons mentioned above, I write to you to respectfully ask that you do not approve this increase at this time. With many residents continuing to struggle through a very difficult economy, an increase of the proposed amount is simply unrealistic. Please feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Very truly yours,

Dean G. Skelos
Senate Majority Leader