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Kathy Cooper

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 9:33 AM
To: Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; IRRRC; eregop@pahousegop.com; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net; regcomments@pa.gov; apankake@pasen.gov
Cc: c-jflanagan@pa.gov
Subject: Comment received - Proposed Rulemaking: Safe Drinking Water General Update and Fees

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IRRC
2017 SEP 25 A 9:33



Re: eComment System

The Department of Environmental Protection has received the following comments on Proposed Rulemaking: Safe Drinking Water General Update and Fees.

Commenter Information:

John Brenner
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Comments entered:

Environmental related topics are generally a bore to the public and our policymakers. It is easy to cut funds from an industry that stays out of sight and out of mind. Over the past decade the health of many Pennsylvanians has been put at risk as tax dollars have been redirected away from DEP in the state budget.

DEP needs funding to maintain primacy. Governor Wolf directed DEP to increase permit fees and establish new annual fees to address the funding gap. DEP proposed the fee package to the Environmental Quality Board in May 2017. The fee package, new annual fees would be instituted for all public water systems. Additionally, one-time permit fees would be increased.

DEP does a lot relating to protect public health, even though Pennsylvanians may not know it. DEP regulates 93 contaminates, monitors system performance, provides technical, managerial and financial assistance all, to ensure sustainable systems while protecting public health. To continue the mission set forth by the Pennsylvania legislature, more knowledgeable staff is needed. DEP and water systems have been asked to do more with less. Water system infrastructure has suffered due to regulations that have directed a great deal of investment decisions while sources of public funding have eroded.

Legislators may believe that systems should raise rates, however systems will not raise rates because they cannot. At the national and state level, water may not be important, however at the local level water rates are politically charged. Our water system infrastructure has suffered due to regulations that have directed a great deal of investment decisions at water treatment systems all while sources of public funding have eroded.

As for this community, before a drop of water can be used at the tap, prices are already at \$170.00 per quarter because of debt deficits with upgrading infrastructures and updates. This fee is without operations and maintenance, treatment, and regular testing. How can the average family afford more on these bills. This is not easy for anyone, but the health and safety of water

should be at the top. More money for regulatory fees are going to put people, water systems, and public safety and health at risk.

This proposal will only fund the Department of Environmental Protection and ensure Pennsylvania retains regulatory primacy. DEP's mission of protecting the health of Pennsylvanian's will not be accomplished. DEP should focus on ensuring the maintenance of the water industry in order for EPA to also be satisfied.

The Environmental Quality Board should reject the new fee proposal because the budgets of our water systems cannot afford to pay more towards regulatory fees. The legislature should look at other options to protect public health.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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