



TOWN OF DOVER

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November 8, 2023

Hon. Michelle L. Phillips
Secretary to the Commission
NYS Public Service Commission
Three Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12223-1350

Dear Ms. Phillips,

On behalf of the Town of Dover Town Board, the elected officials who represent customers of the Dover Plains hamlet served by the Dover Plains Water Company, we respectfully ask your intervention to mitigate the impending financial hardships that a 67% increase in water bills and quarterly \$30 per customer surcharge will have on our residents. As mentioned in Dover Plains Water Company's letter of Oct. 6, 2023 the increase will result in an average bill of \$600.86 per year along with an ostensibly permanent annual surcharge of \$120.00 per customer to bring a resident's annual total water bill to about \$720.

According to the 2021 American Community Survey, the Dover Plains hamlet census designated place (CDP) has 1,322 residents of which the majority are water company customers. Among hamlet residents who will bear the brunt of the increase are senior citizens of a 100-unit age 55+ mobile home park, dual-income and immigrant families who reside in rental apartments surrounding the Town's train station, single individuals who live in a rent-subsidized apartment building, and small businesses that provide essential services to residents without transportation including food, medical care and household needs. Census data also show the median household income of Dover Plains residents is \$43,125, substantially below the Town's overall median household income of \$77,317. Simply put, the Town's most vulnerable residents will suffer most.

Imposing this level of unanticipated financial hardship on fixed and low-income residents who have no alternative and who are already struggling to make ends meet seems capricious and desultory. Businesses that provide essential services should be accountable and responsible to anticipate, plan and budget for maintenance and upgrades without surreptitiously informing customers that aged infrastructure, major repairs and the lack of an escrow account rest upon their customers to rectify. We thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of the negative impact of this rate increase on our residents in your final decision.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Yeno
Town Supervisor