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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg

March 15, 2024

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Chairman Stephen DeFrank  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: Docket #M-2016-2543193 – Revisions to Guidelines for Section 1329 Acquisitions

Dear Chairman DeFrank:

I write this letter in support of your efforts to bolster public notice and informed decision making by our local communities in the proposed revisions to the Commission's procedures and guidelines regarding water and wastewater acquisitions under 66 Pa.C.S. §1329. While these are good first steps, I believe there is additional room to enhance and strengthen transparency and public input in this process. These acquisitions have massive impacts upon the communities served by both the acquiring and to-be-acquired systems that oftentimes are not felt until it is too late in the process to change.

The proposal to require multiple public meetings before signing asset purchase agreements is a positive step and I would argue that the public interest is best served by ensuring these meetings are publicized in multiple clear and conspicuous manners so that community participation is meaningful. I also believe that your second proposal requiring rate impact notice would be best utilized *prior* to these public input hearings. Allowing the public to fully comprehend the fiscal impact of a pending decision is essential to meaningful debate and discussion on these matters.

I also appreciate the Commission's attempt to appropriately weight valuation appraisals in these matters along with the reasonableness review ratio. I think these measures play to the strengths of the Public Utility Commission given the long-standing experience with quarterly earnings reports and calculating reasonable rates of return for our regulated industries.

As an overarching sentiment, I would respectfully call upon the Commission to take measures that ensure meaningful public input, contemplative deliberation and protect existing ratepayers of public utilities from rate impacts that are not truly in the public interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan D. Cutler".

**BRYAN D. CUTLER**  
Republican Leader  
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