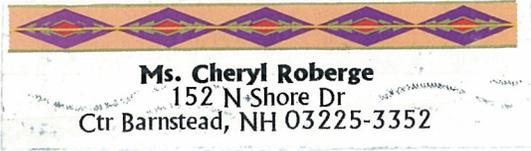


DW08-052



June 16, 2008

New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301



RE: Pittsfield Aqueduct Co., Inc. petition for increase in rates

Dear Sir or Madam:

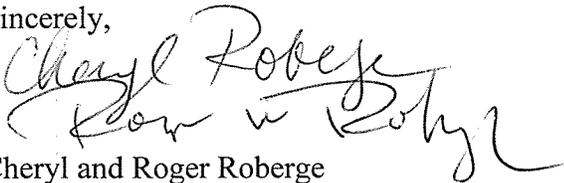
My husband and I are residents of Locke Lake Colony in Center Barnstead, NH. We received notice recently of Pittsfield Aqueduct Company's petition to the NH PUC for approval to increase its rates to customers of Locke Lake Colony in Center Barnstead, in addition to those customers located at Birch Hill in Conway and Sunrise Estates in Middleton. We are outraged at the proposed increases!!!! While we do agree that Pittsfield Aqueduct Co. (PAC) should be compensated for their investment made in upgrading treatment systems and to cover increased operating costs, the rate of increase they have proposed is preposterous and would create financial difficulties for many families, ours included, in these communities who are already struggling to pay the bills with the increasingly unstable economic situation due to rising fuel costs, food costs, utilities, etc. as well as being threatened with the prospect of job layoffs and terminations due to companies' efforts to cut costs. PAC is proposing that we pay approximately \$100 per month for water! That is an outrage! My husband and I both have family members that live in other communities where they pay approximately \$30 per quarter, or \$120 per year. PAC is proposing that we pay nearly 10 times as much! It would be financial hardship for many families to be asked to pay such an exorbitant amount of money for water. This rate reflects the average water usage of a small household and does not take into account the increased usage of water during the spring and summer months when people plant gardens and flowers and water their lawns. I shudder to think of how high our water bill would be at the end of a particularly dry summer month when we are trying to keep our garden from dying. What will our bill be then?...\$200?! That is ludicrous. Unfair and unjust.

While PAC certainly is entitled to compensation, what they are proposing is grossly unjust. The temporary increase of 179.64% to cover the cost of investments they have made seems like a reasonable rate for the permanent increase with perhaps a lesser percentage increase, maybe in the range of 90% or so, being reasonable for a temporary increase. These figures are, of course, based solely on what we as customers believe to be fair and just rates of increase for services provided in comparison to what other communities pay for their water service. The rates that PAC are proposing for permanent increases would be detrimental to the communities that they service as anybody trying to sell a home in one of these communities in the future would find it more difficult to get anyone to buy a home based simply on the fact that they would be paying \$100 or more per month for water service.

We ask that you consider the families living in these communities. We are not rich people. As for myself, I earned less than \$25,000 last year, and my husband approximately twice that. The homes here are mainly small to modest-sized homes with two or three bedrooms. The families here are already struggling to meet the demands of rising costs of everything from food to clothing to utilities, not to mention travel expenses with the historically sky-high gas prices! It will soon become unaffordable for many to live in the community of Locke Lake Colony in Center Barnstead due to ever rising taxes (with a new high school having been built four years ago), the Locke Lake colony fees, and now this water service issue, in addition to commuting costs to and from work. What PAC is proposing will force more families to consider seeking alternate housing in other towns and communities and will drive people out of the area. We want clean water, but we cannot afford to pay what PAC is proposing. There must be a compromise, a solution that we all can live with where we are not putting families in a state of financial hardship where they cannot afford to do laundry at home, take a longer than three-minute shower, or to plant a garden in the springtime to help offset their skyrocketing grocery bills.

We urge you to consider the working families and the struggles they are facing in today's strained and declining economy. We don't understand how PAC can justify such an exorbitant increase in rates for their customers as this is not a rich community and many of us are barely getting by as it is. My husband bought our house here more than 20 years ago and we have loved living here all this time, but if PAC is successful in raising our rates to \$100 per month, we will seriously have to consider looking to move elsewhere, which is something that I fervently hope will never come to pass. A 311.84% increase is NOT fair and just. We hope you will agree.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Roberge" on the top line and "Roger Roberge" on the bottom line. The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed names.

Cheryl and Roger Roberge
Locke Lake Colony, Center Barnstead residents