

# *Town of Hampton*



December 20, 2011

Debra A. Howland

Executive Director

New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission

21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10

Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: DW 11-238, Aquarion Water Company of New Hampshire, Inc.

Water Infrastructure and Conservation Adjustment (WICA)

2012 WICA Surcharge and 2012-14 Projects

Town of Hampton position

Dear Ms. Howland:

On October 27, 2011, Aquarion Water Company of New Hampshire, Inc. (Aquarion) filed its petition for approval of its 2012 WICA surcharge and its proposed 2012-14 capital projects under its WICA tariff provision. The Commission had approved the WICA as a pilot program in Order No. 25,019 (September 25, 2009) in docket DW 08-098, Aquarion's last rate case.

As noted on page 5 of that Order of September 25, 2009, the Town of Hampton was not a party to the settlement agreement approved by that Order and has continually expressed concern for the magnitude and frequency of Aquarion's rate increases, especially in the down economy that has prevailed for the last few years. The rate of return that Aquarion has been allowed to maintain is disturbing in light of the pressures being faced by consumers even to maintain ownership of property.

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It was hoped that the WICA program could help decrease the frequency of rate cases, but it is has been revealed that after just two consecutive years of WICA charges being sought, Aquarion is planning to file for a rate increase this coming Spring of 2012. This came out at the Technical Session on December 7, 2011 and was indicated again to the Selectmen at their meeting last night by Company representatives. Notwithstanding this plan to seek a rate increase shortly, Aquarion is still seeking to update its proposed WICA charge for 2012 to 3.7269%.

Accordingly, I am writing this letter to you to object to the 2012 WICA charge in behalf of the Hampton Board of Selectmen. I am not asking for an evidentiary hearing on this subject, but I would appreciate this Objection being brought to the attention of the Commission and considered in whether or not to impose this charge at this time.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mark S. Gearreald, Esq.

Hampton Town Attorney

cc. Hampton Board of Selectmen  
Town Manager  
Service List (via e-mail)