



SPONY

THE SMALL PROPERTY OWNERS OF NEW YORK

Statement in Opposition to Proposed Water Rate Increase

Submitted to the NYC Department of Environmental Protection and the NYC Water Board

As small building owners in New York City, we strongly oppose the proposed water and sewer rate increase for Fiscal Year 2026. This increase will place an unjust and unsustainable burden on small property owners who are already struggling to maintain affordability, keep up with rising operational costs, and continue providing safe, quality housing in our communities.

Small building owners are not large real estate developers or corporations with expansive portfolios. Many of us are long-time residents who own one or two buildings, often multi-family homes, and are deeply invested in our neighborhoods. Unlike larger landlords, we lack the economies of scale that help offset rising costs. Water rate hikes hit us harder because they are an expense we cannot reduce or control, and which grow year after year without relief.

Furthermore, these increases come at a time when inflation, insurance premiums, property taxes, and maintenance costs are already putting immense pressure on our ability to operate responsibly. Many of us have not raised rents in line with our rising expenses, choosing instead to preserve affordability for our tenants—who are often working-class New Yorkers. Every rate hike undermines this commitment and makes it more difficult to avoid passing on costs to renters. Others who operate rent stabilized housing are bound the low increases approved by the annual RGB process, which have continually ignored the data illustrating rising costs and particularly utilities.

We recognize the importance of maintaining and upgrading our water infrastructure, as well as supporting initiatives that promote clean water. However, funding these essential services must be done in an equitable manner.

We urge the Water Board and the Department of Environmental Protection to:

1. **Reject the proposed rate increase**, or significantly reduce it for small residential buildings (1–10 units).
2. **Explore alternative sources of funding**, including progressive pricing structures that ask more of high-consumption commercial and luxury users.
3. **Implement relief programs or exemptions** for small property owners who provide affordable housing or who meet certain income thresholds.

Small property owners are a vital part of New York's housing ecosystem. We need thoughtful, balanced policies that support—not punish—our efforts to provide stable, affordable housing to New Yorkers.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Korchak, Board President
Small Property Owners of NY

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