

WESTERNBERKS

WATER

Phone: 610.678.4400 • www.wbwa.org



June 5, 2018

Hon. Daryl D. Metcalfe, Chair
State Government Committee
144 Main Capitol Building
PO Box 202012
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2012

Hon. Matthew D. Bradford, Democratic Chair
State Government Committee
325 Main Capitol Building
PO Box 202070
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2070

Dear PA State Government Committee Chair:

I have been asked to share our experience and relationship with the Delaware River Basin Commission. Western Berks Water Authority (WBWA) is a Pennsylvania Municipal Authority that serves 25,000 customers in Western Berks County. Our water supply comes from a US Army Corps of Engineers reservoir in Berks County (Blue Marsh Lake). Our approach is to build strong relationships with our customers, vendors, and regulatory agencies.

The DRBC is one of those agencies that we have successfully built a strong beneficial relationship with. Dealing with the federal government and the Army Corps of Engineers has proven to be difficult at times. The staff at the DRBC have been very helpful to our authority in communicating our priorities to the US Army Corps. We have always been treated very fairly and with respect as we stress our concerns regarding our raw water supply. Our situation is very complex, with the need to coordinate permitting, water allocation and projects with the PA-DEP, DRBC and USACE.

We are in the middle of a \$5.5 million project to provide a new raw water line to our plant. The new line will connect to the US Army Corps of Engineers Blue Marsh dam. The DRBC and PA DEP have worked together to help us achieve our mission, which is to provide award-winning water at an affordable price to our customers. We appreciate and understand the budgetary pressures that face all regulatory agencies and water authorities.

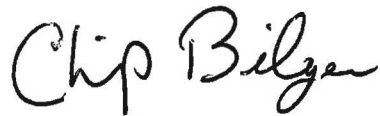


We understand that funding is necessary for regulatory agencies and are willing to bear a reasonable cost of funding the important operations of the DRBC and PA DEP. Increased fees are coming at us from multiple directions, as long as the fees are representative of the service provided to water providers from the agencies, we have no problem bearing the cost. The current fees from the DRBC are reasonable, and the proposed new fees coming from PA DEP to fill the 7.5 million dollar funding gap is also reasonable.

It is not unusual to hear complaints from water suppliers about the regulatory agencies. However, our approach of building relationships has proven to serve us well. This approach will only work if all parties involved work towards that same goal. I am proud to say that that the DRBC's approach, as it relates to assisting WBWA, has been understanding and rock-solid as it relates to supporting our operation.

If I can provide any other details regarding our relationship with the DRBC, please feel free to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chip Bilger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

L. E. Chip Bilger II
Executive Director
Western Berks Water Authority

CC: PA State Government Committee Members (emails)

