

From: [Diane Weckerle](#)
To: CEO@GLWATER.org
Subject: Water Affordability Bills HB 5088-5093 and SB 549-554
Date: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 2:41:31 PM

Dear GLWA Board Members.

Statement:

I'd like to speak to the need for the Water Affordability Program (HB 5088-5093) in the suburbs. The need in Detroit and Flint is well documented. But research and interviews show that the counties including Macomb and Oakland and Wayne need this legislative package as well.

Increasing poverty in the suburbs has become a national trend. The suburbs around Detroit experienced an 87% increase in poverty between 2000 and 2014. This rise in poverty and the growing costs of water has made water and sewerage bills unaffordable for many suburban households. We cannot close our eyes to reality. While WRAP has been helpful to residents in need, it is underfunded, temporary and the bills remain too high for many to pay. And many suburbs rely on shutting off water to households and imposing liens on the property taxes of these residents to force them to pay. This is not a humane solution.

Over the last few years we learned that families throughout the state, including rural areas, have trouble paying their bills. Whether it was due to unemployment, serious illness, loss of a partner or when a head of household became a caregiver, there were reasons why anyone could face a loss of income. It's time we passed protections into law to prevent families from living through the consuming crisis of being without water, the fear of having their children removed by Protective Services or having their homes foreclosed.

I would like to ask that you pass a resolution in support of this much needed Water Affordability bill package. I support this package of bills.

Diane Weckerle
Retired Public Health Nurse, Detroit and Wayne County