

# Great Lakes Water Authority



735 Randolph Street  
Detroit, Michigan 48226  
[glwater.legistar.com](http://glwater.legistar.com)

## Legislation Text

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### Water Residential Assistance Program Changes

Agenda of: June 22, 2022

Item No.: **2022-209**

Amount: N/A

**TO:** The Honorable  
Board of Directors  
Great Lakes Water Authority

**FROM:** Suzanne R. Coffey P.E.  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Great Lakes Water Authority

**DATE:** June 8, 2022

**RE:** **Water Residential Assistance Program Changes**

### MOTION

Upon recommendation of Nicolette Bateson, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer, the Board of Directors (Board) of the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), **approves the following Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP) changes effective July 1, 2022.**

- 1) Authorize a WRAP “Sliding Scale Assistance Approach” that is based on relative average residential bill by community and household income to determine the level of payment assistance;
- 2) Authorize the elimination of the opt-in/opt-out and service level options for GLWA Member Communities, thereby allowing all eligible households in the GLWA service region to take advantage of the program;
- 3) Require regular reporting to the Audit Committee of WRAP performance and changes to the “Sliding Scale Assistance Schedule” to the Audit Committee on no less than a quarterly basis; and

- 4) authorizes the ICEO to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

### **BACKGROUND**

GLWA has been rolling out improvements to the WRAP program over the past two years. Recently, on March 25, 2022, the Audit Committee received a report related to “Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP) Update”. The purpose of that report was to advise the Audit Committee of the efforts to identify improvements for a more effective WRAP. The Audit Committee indicated directional alignment with the proposal. Staff noted that there were several tasks to achieve a July 1, 2022 effective date.

### **JUSTIFICATION**

Since the time that the above report was presented, staff has communicated with stakeholders and has engaged a firm to conduct a study to determine the average level of the residential bill by community. While it will be a few weeks before that analysis is complete to provide the details by community, it is recommended that the structural changes be put into place to meet a launch for July 1, 2022. The proposed Board Action and related administrative tasks to carry out the changes are outlined below.

#### **Change #1 - Sliding Scale Assistance**

Proposed Board Action: Authorize a WRAP “Sliding Scale Assistance Approach” that is based on relative average residential bill by community and household income to determine the level of payment assistance. The scale is established administratively with reporting to the Audit Committee to adapt to changing bill amounts by community.

Related Administrative Task: Utilizing data from a number of sources, including individual communities, establish and publish the WRAP “Sliding Scale Assistance Schedule”.

#### **Change #2 - Eliminate Opt-In/Opt-Out Provision**

Proposed Board Action: Authorize the elimination of the opt-in/opt-out and service level options for GLWA Member Communities, thereby allowing all eligible households in the GLWA service region to take advantage of the program.

Related Administrative Task: Communicate this change to Member Partner Communities and service delivery partners.

#### **Change #3 - Reporting**

A foundation to these changes is regular reporting of WRAP performance and changes to the “Sliding Scale Assistance Schedule” to the Audit Committee on no less than a quarterly basis.

### **BUDGET IMPACT**

This item does not impact the budget.

### **COMMITTEE REVIEW**

The above proposed program changes were presented to the GLWA Audit Committee at its May 27, 2022, meeting. The Audit Committee unanimously recommended that the Great Lakes Water Authority Board of Directors approve the proposed program changes as presented.

**SHARED SERVICES IMPACT**

This item does not impact the shared services agreement between GLWA and DWSD.