



# CITY OF PITTSBURGH

“America’s Most Livable City”

*Office of Mayor William Peduto*

May 28, 2019

Gladys Brown Dutrieuille  
Chairman, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
400 North Street  
Keystone Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Chairman Brown Dutrieuille,

Rumors are circulating throughout Pittsburgh and Harrisburg about Aqua America trying to buy water utilities, and company officials notifying elected officials of their interest in purchasing the Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority.

I want to be very clear about this: Pittsburgh’s water belongs to its people and the PWSA will never be up for sale.

PWSA, the municipal water authority serving more than 300,000 people in and around Pittsburgh, has for the first time in decades made great strides in addressing long-term legacy issues regarding water safety and infrastructure. To be certain, in the past few years we have reversed decades-long disinvestment of critical infrastructure.

As part of a \$1.1 billion improvement plan it is removing lead from all service lines, making major water system upgrades and improving authority management. PWSA has replaced more than 3,000 lead service lines, and with last year’s announcement by the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST), another \$49 million in funding will allow the authority to replace 4,000 more lead service lines throughout its system, exceeding required mandates.

Positive momentum is clearly on the side of the publicly-owned utility. I write you today to raise my concerns, which are shared by many others, that a private utility may try to take advantage of PWSA’s recent successes to benefit their bottom line, and not the ratepayers and residents of Pittsburgh. These concerns have grown since Aqua America announced its \$4.2 billion acquisition of Peoples Gas, creating a new Pennsylvania-based water and gas utility. With the strides PWSA has made in improving its infrastructure it is possible this new utility could be eyeing the authority and its ratepayer base for another acquisition.

I completely oppose this and it is my hope the Public Utility Commission, and all those copied on this letter, will publicly join me.

Nothing is more important to life than safe and reliable drinking water. Pittsburgh – a city that was born and then thrived because of its access to three mighty rivers – is lucky to have such a publicly-owned resource, and it should remain that way for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W Peduto', with a stylized, cursive script.

William Peduto

Mayor, City of Pittsburgh

CC:

Governor Tom Wolf

Senate President Pro Tempore Joe Scarnati

Speaker of the House Mike Turzai

Senate Minority Leader Jay Costa

House Minority Leader Frank Dermody

Attorney General Josh Shapiro