CONSUMER ADVOCATES ATTEND BOLINGBROOK PUBLIC FORUM TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST ILLINOIS AMERICAN WATER'S $152 MILLION RATE-HIKE REQUEST

AARP Illinois and the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) on Monday urged state regulators to reject Illinois American Water's proposed $152 million rate-hike request at an Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) public forum in Bolingbrook. The increase would be Illinois American's third rate hike since 2016.

In February, Illinois American, which serves about 1.3 million Illinois customers, filed for a $152.4 million rate-hike request that could raise water/wastewater bills by up to nearly $30 a month. Illinois American has won $120 million in additional rate hikes in less than a decade–an $85 million increase in 2022 and a $35 million hike in 2016. Plus, the utility's parent, American Water, has made nearly $1.8 billion in profits over the last two years.

Responding to a request from AARP Illinois, the ICC scheduled five public forums on proposed private water increases this year. Regarding Illinois American, there was a forum in Jerseyville in June; one in Bolingbrook Monday night; and an upcoming forum in Champaign: 7-9 p.m., Tuesday, July 23, Champaign Public Library, Robeson Pavilion Room AB, 200 W. Green Street, Champaign.

The ICC also scheduled these forums on a $19.2 million Aqua Illinois rate-hike request:
- 7-9 p.m., Monday, July 29, McHenry County College, Luecht Auditorium, 8900 US Highway 14, Crystal Lake
- 7-9 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 1, Olivet Nazarene University, Wisner Auditorium, One University Ave., Bourbonnais

Statements from AARP and CUB:

Philippe Largent, State Director, AARP Illinois
"AARP Illinois requested these public hearings because Illinois American and Aqua customers deserve the chance to be heard on how these significant increases would impact them. Thousands of older customers, including those on fixed incomes, have written to tell us that these increases will mean they have to make tough choices between paying for water or paying for basic necessities like food and prescription drugs."

CUB Executive Director Sarah Moskowitz
"Illinois American Water's proposed rate hike is unjust and unreasonable and should be slashed. Illinois American customers are already frustrated with their escalating bills, and this punishing rate hike would be a hardship for them. In its latest rate-hike request, Illinois American is pushing for an excessive increase in its profit rate for shareholders, and it wants customers to cover millions of dollars in bonuses designed to enrich executives without any benefit to customers. CUB urges state regulators to say no to the Illinois American and Aqua rate-hike requests. People just want clean and affordable water. They should not have to cover an exorbitant, unfair profit rate for corporate shareholders and frivolous bonuses designed to enrich executives."

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AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. To learn about AARP's work in Illinois, visit www.aarp.org/IL or @AARPIllinois.

The Citizens Utility Board (CUB) is celebrating its 40th anniversary as Illinois' leading nonprofit utility watchdog group. Created by the Illinois Legislature, CUB opened its doors in 1984 to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then, CUB has saved consumers more than $20 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds. For more information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline at 1-800-669-5556 or visit CUB's award-winning website, www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org.