

WC-2 Resolution Recommending Federal Rate Relief Remedies for Low Income Water and Wastewater Customers Resulting from the COVID-19 Health Emergency

Whereas National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioner (“NARUC”) members are keenly aware of the financial hardships and public health issues of assuring consistent and continued supply of clean water and proper treatment of wastewater as life-dependent, essential services;

Whereas NARUC recognizes that many utility customers are already falling behind on their utility bills and will need uniform programmatic assistance and financial help to get back on their feet following the current pandemic;

Whereas NARUC appreciates and supports efforts to not only increase the Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (“LIHEAP”) afforded to electric and gas customers, but to create a LIHEAP-like program for water and wastewater low-income customers;

Whereas during this crisis, if customers are unable to pay their electric and/or natural gas bill they are unlikely to be able to pay their water and wastewater bill;

Whereas NARUC recognizes there is no such equivalent assistance program for water and wastewater. The membership seeks the creation of a LIHEAP-like water and wastewater funding assistance program, recognizing that water and wastewater services are essential for public health and safety; *and*

Whereas NARUC, with exception, wholly does not regulate municipal nor municipal utility authority water and their wastewater systems, it acknowledges that Congress should expand funding and access to funding with consideration to all of the tens of thousands of water and wastewater systems nationwide, whether investor-owned or municipal systems; *now therefore be it*

Resolved that the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 2020 Summer Policy Summit conducted virtually, supports the creation of a federal LIHEAP-like program for water and wastewater systems to provide stability and affordability of these essential-to-life services for low-income customers.

Sponsored by the Committee on Water

Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors on July 22, 2020