



**COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM BARBARA BRY
CITY OF SAN DIEGO
DISTRICT 1**

September 11, 2020

Chairwoman Gloria Gray
Metropolitan Water District Board of Directors
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
P.O. Box 54153
Los Angeles, CA 90054-0153

RE: Agenda Item 8-1: 2021 rates and charges

Dear Chair Gray and members of the Board,

I write to you today to strongly urge you to reconsider Metropolitan Water District's (MWD) planned 2021 rate increases in order to provide meaningful financial relief and assistance to ratepayers throughout the MWD service area.

It should not take a study to realize that Southern California is today in a health and financial crisis caused by COVID-19. No matter what MWD member agencies are experiencing, I can assure you that cities and ratepayers throughout Southern California are suffering devastating cutbacks and impacts on quality of life.

Like every other city I am aware of, the City of San Diego experienced an extremely challenging budget process a few months ago, recommending unprecedented budget cuts. The City is urging all other boards and commissions to take similar steps in order to provide financial relief for our communities who are struggling to pay rent, keep the lights on and pay for needed medical care.

I know for a fact that the San Diego County Water Authority has already implemented meaningful measures to mitigate its rate increase and I am asking that MWD do the same; this is not a time to set a "business as usual" standard. The Water Authority has committed to passing on every penny of rate savings that the MWD board approves resulting in savings for San Diego ratepayers. A copy of the Water Authority's letter and suggestions are attached, though we welcome the cutbacks in whatever form MWD may choose so long as they benefit all ratepayers, not just some ratepayers as your April board action did.

As you prepare for the upcoming Board meeting, I respectfully urge you to reconsider the proposed 2021 rate increases and adopt specific cost saving measures *now* in order to do your part to help ratepayers throughout the service area. Delaying action until June 2021 will obviously do nothing to stop the impact of rate hikes planned to go into effect in January 2021.

Sincerely,



Barbara Bry
Council President Pro Tem
San Diego City Council

Enclosure