



City of Detroit Detroit City Council

FROM THE DESK OF
Mary Waters, Member At-Large
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RESOLUTION SUPPORTING STATE WATER AFFORDABILITY BILLS

WHEREAS, the City of Detroit Water and Sewage Department started an unprecedented initiative to shut off the water to tens of thousands of Detroiters in 2014, with the only reprieve coming in the form of COVID-era prohibitions on water shutoffs¹; and

WHEREAS, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provided the State of Michigan and the City of Detroit with funding that enabled the Detroit Water and Sewage Department (DWSD) to start the successful Lifeline Plan, giving Detroiters in arrears the opportunity to have their water restored and any back-debt capped and put on a payment plan²; and

WHEREAS, with the expiration of ARPA funding next year, the future of the Lifeline Plan is in jeopardy, while water shutoffs have restarted after the sunset of COVID protections³; and

WHEREAS, Detroiters, who have some of the lowest median incomes in the state⁴, are once again at risk of experiencing water shutoffs; and

WHEREAS, access to safe, clean water and sewage is a fundamental right and necessary for public health and safety; and

WHEREAS, with an uncertain fiscal situation in the federal government, protecting residents' access to affordable, safe, clean water and sewage requires collaboration between the City of

¹ <https://www.aclumich.org/en/cases/water-shutoffs-detroit>

² <https://detroitmi.gov/departments/water-and-sewerage-department/dwsd-customer-service/dwsd-here-help-water-assistance-programs/lifeline-plan>

³ <https://www.michiganpublic.org/economy/2023-01-06/detroits-going-to-restart-water-shutoffs-heres-how-you-can-avoid-one>

⁴ <https://www.city-data.com/income/income-Detroit-Michigan.html>

Detroit and the Michigan State Government; and

WHEREAS, a bi-partisan coalition of members of the Michigan State Senate and Michigan State House of Representatives have introduced legislation package of bills, including Senate Bills 248,249,250,251,252, and 253, as well as House Bill 4555⁵ to:

- Establish a water affordability program in the State of Michigan
- Establish a Low Income Water Residential Affordability Task Force
- Establish a public transparency program for water rates
- Establish protections for renters against landlord abuse on water rates
- Provide protections against water shutoffs; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Detroit City Council endorses Michigan Senate Bills 248,249,250,251,252, and 253, as well as House Bill 4555, and calls upon the Michigan Legislature to expeditiously pass these bills; and be it

FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Michigan Legislature, the Governor of the State of Michigan, the members of the Detroit Tenant's Rights Commission, and the Mayor's Office as well as all parties interested in ensuring the rights of renters are protected in the City of Detroit.

⁵ <https://michiganadvance.com/2025/06/25/water-affordability-advocates-ask-gop-led-michigan-house-for-60m-to-fund-assistance-program/>