


David Whitaker, Esq.
Director
Irvin Corley, Jr.
Executive Policy Manager
Marcell R. Todd, Jr.
Director, City Planning
Commission
Janese Chapman
Director, Historic Designation
Advisory Board

John Alexander
Roland Amarteifio
LaKisha Barclift, Esq.
Paige Blessman
M. Rory Bolger, Ph.D., FAICP
Eric Fazzini, AICP
Willene Green
Christopher Gulock, AICP

City of Detroit
CITY COUNCIL
LEGISLATIVE POLICY DIVISION
208 Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
Detroit, Michigan 48226
Phone: (313) 224-4946 Fax: (313) 224-4336

Derrick Headd
Marcel Hurt, Esq.
Kimani Jeffrey
Phillip Keller, Esq.
Edward King
Kelsey Maas
Jamie Murphy
Analine Powers, Ph.D.
W. Akilah Redmond
Laurie Anne Sabatini
Rebecca Savage
Sabrina Shockley
Renee Short
Floyd Stanley
Thomas Stephens, Esq.
Timarie Szwed
Theresa Thomas
Ashley A. Wilson

TO: The Honorable Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director 
Legislative Policy Division Staff

DATE: October 6, 2023

RE: **RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR WATER AFFORDABILITY BILLS**
SPONSORED BY SENATOR STEPHANIE CHANG

Council Member Scott Benson requested that LPD provide City Council with a Resolution of Support for Water Affordability Bills Sponsored by Senator Stephanie Chang.

BY COUNCIL MEMBER SCOTT BENSON

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR WATER AFFORDABILITY BILLS SPONSORED BY
SENATOR STEPHANIE CHANG**

WHEREAS, On October 3, 2023, Michigan State Senator Stephanie Chang and others introduced a series of bills to the Michigan Senate which, if enacted, would implement a multi-pronged approach to ensure that all Michigan residents receive water bills that are affordable and to avoid water shut-offs; and

WHEREAS, SB 549 would create a low-income water residential affordability program under which qualifying individuals would not pay more than 3% of their household income on their water bill; and

WHEREAS, SB 550 would create the low-income water residential affordability fund within the state treasury, which will be used to implement the residential water affordability program and, among other things, pay for the difference between the original bill and the discounted rate under the affordability program; and

WHEREAS, The low-income water residential affordability fund will be funded, in part, by a \$2 per month fee on retail water meters; and

WHEREAS, SB 551 would create the “water shutoff protection act,” which would require water providers to give various forms of notice to residential customers prior to water shutoffs and prevent water shutoffs for individuals enrolled in the low-income water residential affordability program if minimum payments are made; and

WHEREAS, In 2014, the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) commenced the largest residential water shutoff in US history by terminating water service to over 20,000 Detroit residents for lack of payment, without regard to residents’ health or financial status; and

WHEREAS, DWSD’s practice of water shutoffs has been widely criticized as inhumane, and Detroit continues to have the highest water bill burden among comparable cities¹; and

WHEREAS, After a 3 year moratorium that began during the early COVID-19 pandemic, DWSD resumed water shutoffs as of August 14, 2023; and

WHEREAS, The Detroit City Council recognizes that access to clean and safe water is a fundamental human right; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, That the Detroit City Council hereby strongly urges the Michigan Legislature to pass Senate Bills 549, 550, and 551; **NOW BE IT FINALLY**

RESOLVED, That the Detroit City Clerk is directed to send this resolution to Mayor Mike Duggan, the Director of the Great Lakes Water Authority, and the Detroit delegations of both the Michigan State House and Senate, in addition to Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

¹ Food and water watch, *America’s Secret Water Crisis* - https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/rpt_1810_watershutoffs-web2.pdf

