



NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS  
Member of Assembly 64<sup>th</sup> District

THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER  
Committee on Governmental Employees

COMMITTEES  
Banks  
Corporations, Authorities & Commissions  
Transportation  
Ways and Means

August 8, 2013

Hon. Carter Strickland  
Commissioner  
New York City Department of Environmental Protection  
59-17 Junction Boulevard  
Flushing, NY 11373

Dear Commissioner Strickland:

We have each contacted you with regard to an increasingly straining issue for our shared constituents. Many survivors of Hurricane Sandy are now facing bills from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) charging them for water usage while their homes were vacant and unattended. We have yet to receive a response on how your agency plans to rectify this situation. Once again, we implore that you work with us on a creative plan to get this done.

We are well aware of the need for DEP to charge a daily fee to fund maintenance of connections throughout the system. However, it is our understanding that many residents in the Hurricane Sandy disaster area are now faced with water bills, not of a mere nominal fee, but three and four-figure sums. We have already expressed that these residents are not in an ordinary state of financial security. The city's *Build It Back* program is just now starting, leaving thousands of homeowners still unsure of where they stand.

It is simply unconscionable to require payment for a service that was unused during a time of crisis. It is imperative that you consider the impact this has on the big picture for those it affects. Many are faced with decisions on where to apply their extremely limited resources, and this impending debt may cause them to cut costs in other areas.

We urge DEP to consider a waiver for those still working their way toward the ability to pay, as well as a corresponding reimbursement for those who have already paid. The impact of this problem is becoming greater everyday as these residents move forward with rebuilding. We must come to an agreement on how to help them as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,

Nicole Malliotakis  
Member of Assembly

James S. Oddo  
Council Minority Leader

cc: Hon. Alan Moss, Chairman, New York City Water Board  
Hon. Cas Holloway, Deputy Mayor for Operations  
Hon. Howard Wolfson, Deputy Mayor for Governmental Affairs & Communications