



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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Chairman

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February 26, 2018

Tommy Wells, Director
Department of Energy and Environment
1200 First Street, N.E.
Washington DC 20002

RE: DOEE Water Quality Standards-Use Attainability Analysis

Dear Director Wells:

I write to you regarding the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority's (DC Water) request that the Department of Energy and Environment conduct a Use Attainability Analysis (UAA) before making any changes to the E. coli recreational water quality criteria. I have serious concerns with DC Water's request as it undermines DOEE's effort to strengthen the E. coli water quality standards in the District. I am in support of DOEE's proposed rulemaking as it will protect District residents from the continued dumping of raw sewage into the District's recreational waters during heavy rain events.

In its request, DC Water claims that the proposed new rule would cause economic hardship on low-income communities because it would create pressure to raise water rates to fund the DC Clean Rivers Project. This argument minimizes other public policy: the health of District residents and of the District's waterways. It should not be our strategy to solve the issue of the costs of the Clean Rivers Project by manipulating water quality standards. DC Water, working with elected officials, should be looking at other ways to address the Clean Rivers costs.

Therefore, I ask that DOEE reject DC Water's request, strengthen water quality requirements, and ensure that District residents are protected. Thank you for your attention with this matter.

Sincerely,

Phil Mendelson, Chairman

cc: Mary Cheh, Councilmember

PM/pj