



Suffolk County Water Authority

SCWA Bill to Reduce Write-Off Losses Signed into Law

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Not Rated

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo this week signed a bill into law that will save Suffolk County Water Authority--and by extension its ratepayers--hundreds of thousands of dollars per year.

Sponsored by State Assemblyman Fred W. Thiele Jr. and State Senator Thomas D. Croci, the law allows unpaid customer balances to be placed as liens on property tax bills. Based on an SCWA proposal, this new statute gives the Authority the same rights as municipal water districts, which were already allowed to place liens on property tax bills. SCWA has in recent years been forced to write off on average more than \$580,000 per year in unpaid water bills.

"Every year, SCWA has to write off hundreds of thousands of dollars in uncollected water rates, fees and charges due to nonpayment of water bills," Thiele said. "And ultimately, these costs are passed along to the customers, like you and I, who pay our bills on time. This legislation will help alleviate that burden, and provide a mechanism by which SCWA can legally seek money owed."

"I'm glad to see government actually trying to protect ratepayers instead of just increasing our rates," Croci said. "I'm proud to work with Suffolk County Water Authority to ensure we are doing everything we can to make living on Long Island more affordable."

"This is a tremendous moment for SCWA, its ratepayers, common sense and bipartisanship in the State Legislature," said SCWA Board Secretary Patrick G. Halpin. "I cannot thank Assemblyman Thiele and Senator Croci enough for their efforts in championing this legislation and shepherding it through their respective legislative bodies and Governor Cuomo for signing it into law. This legislation will provide financial relief to SCWA ratepayers and protect our excellent credit rating by guaranteeing that all bills are paid. Our extremely high credit rating results in our low interest rates."

The Suffolk County Water Authority is an independent public-benefit corporation operating under the authority of the Public Authorities Law of the State of New York. Serving approximately 1.2 million Suffolk County residents, the Authority operates without taxing power on a not-for-profit basis.