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July 15, 2021

Jody Carmody, Docket Supervisor
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 S. Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

RE: Docket No. DW 20-090
Abenaki Water Company and Aquarion Water Company
Joint Petition for Approval of Acquisition

Dear Ms. Carmody:

The Office of the Consumer Advocate (OCA) is in receipt of today's filing by the Petitioners in the above-referenced proceeding. In their submission, the Petitioners represent that they will withdraw the currently pending Abenaki Water Company rate case, docketed as DW 20-112, upon the Commission making a "no adverse impact" determination in the instant proceeding – which, of course, would amount to a deemed approval of the proposed transaction pursuant to RSA 369:8, II.

As the Petitioners note in their letter, the OCA strongly supports this outcome. Although we have been outspoken opponents of the proposed acquisition, the basis of our opposition has been grounded entirely in our concerns about the drastic increases proposed in the rate case. We continue to believe that the Commission cannot make a "no adverse impact" determination with such proposed increases pending.

For essentially the reasons stated by the Petitioners in their pleadings and at hearing, we believe that Aquarion and its ultimate parent, Eversource, represent stronger and therefore better stewards of the various water systems comprising Abenaki than are the current owners. We are fully confident of Aquarion's managerial, financial, and technical capabilities. Although we realize that the outcome proposed in the Petitioners' letter leaves quite a raft of looming issues unresolved, we are convinced that better outcomes, for both ratepayers and shareholders, will be achievable once the proposed transaction closes later this year. Therefore, we respectfully but emphatically urge the Commission's swift approval of the outcome proposed in the Petitioners' letter.

Please feel free to contact me if there are any questions or concerns about the foregoing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "DKreis", written over a white background.

Donald M. Kreis
Consumer Advocate

cc: Service list via electronic mail