

Stanton, Terry A. (Treasury)

From: Heaton, Anna (GOV)
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2016 6:20 PM
To: Weiss, Kurt (DTMB); Stanton, Terry A. (Treasury)
Subject: Water bills PR draft
Attachments: PR 160203 Water billsV2.docx

Thanks for everything today, guys.

Giving you this as an FYI.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2016

11 a.m.

Gov. Rick Snyder: Budget recommendation will include \$30 million for Flint water bill repayments

*Consumption and Consumer Use Credit provides relief to residents who
cannot drink their water*

Funding is on top of \$39.3 million in relief already allocated in last year

LANSING, Mich. – Gov. Rick Snyder today said he will ask the Legislature to approve a \$30 million water payment relief plan for the residents of Flint that will keep their water service on and eliminate the need to pay for water they cannot drink.

The governor's proposal will be part of the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year budget he will present to lawmakers next week, and calls for a Consumption and Consumer Use Credit the city of Flint can apply to residents' water bills until state and federal officials certify the water is safe for consumption.

"Flint residents will not have to pay for water they cannot drink," Snyder said. "My budget recommendation will include the request that the state make payments to the city's water system for residential bills going back to April 2014 and alleviate the need for residential water shutoffs."

Under the plan, the city will credit residential bills going back to April 2014 for the cost of drinking water residents could not use. Because the city-issued water bills include sewage charges, residents should not plan to receive the exact amount they originally paid. Prior residents of Flint who paid water bills between April of 2014 and now will be able to submit their bills to the city for reimbursement. The city also will receive funding for unpaid residential bills to help maintain the financial integrity of the public water system.

The funding to the city is meant to ensure no resident will have their water shutoff for nonpayment until the water is certified safe for consumption.

"As an American who sympathizes with the plight of Flint residents, it's hard to find moral justification in having them pay for water that is not fit for human consumption or bathing," said Marc Edwards, Charles P. Lunsford Professor of Environmental and Water Resources Engineering at Virginia Tech University. "This essentially refunds all the money associated with consumption or consumer use. I think it's an amazing gesture of common sense and good will and it corrects an injustice. I don't think there's a precedent for this. I feel so encouraged by the direction this is going."