



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

File #: R2021-1304, **Version:** 1

CITY OF CHICAGO

ALDERMAN RODERICK T. SAWYER CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN RELATIONS CITY COUNCIL CITY HALL - ROOM 300 121 NORTH LASALLE STREET CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
60602

To President and Members of the City Council:

Your Committee on Health and Human Relations to which was referred a communication on calling for investment of American Rescue Act funds to install water meters and repair water leaks prioritizing low-income/underserved communities, (Alderman Sigcho-Lopez)

Re-referral to the Committee on the Budget and Government Operations R2021-

1304

begs leave to report and recommend that your Honorable Body, Approve the proposed communication transmitted here with.

This recommendation was concurred in by a viva voce vote of the Committee on Health and Human Relations.

Roderick T. Sawyer, Chairman Committee on Health and Human Relations

Respectfully submitted,

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Resolution

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago ("the City") has not fully installed water meters city-wide to calculate water bills based on consumption, and instead calculates bills based on property size measured in square feet; and

WHEREAS, this has created grossly high water bills for small businesses and non-profit organizations that are charged based on the size of their property and not their consumption; and

WHEREAS, low-income/underserved communities suffer disproportionately financially as utility bills represent a larger amount of their income than for mid to upper income owners and renters; and

WHEREAS, the American Rescue Act allows for funding to subsidize the installation of water meters; and

WHEREAS, the American Rescue Act funded subsidies should prioritize preference for neighborhoods with high water bills and older infrastructure so that every property in Chicago is able to be billed based on consumption; and

WHEREAS, in the event of a water leak, the property owner is responsible for fixing the leak if the City deems that the leak is not on City property, which is dependent on where the City installed the property's water meter; and

WHEREAS, the property is responsible for increased water bills if they are not able to pay to fix the leaks; and

WHEREAS, these water bills can add up to tens of thousands of dollars for the property owner and tenants with inability to pay causing the bills to go into collections, possibly resulting in liens and other threats to property owners' and tenants' overall economic security; and

WHEREAS, the City further creates a public safety threat via erosion and other damage to public infrastructure by allowing water leaks to go unfixed, thereby profiting off of the increased fees and deferred maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the loss of clean water access is a public health emergency for any Chicago business or resident; and

WHEREAS, members of the Chicago City Council and the Department of Water Management have previously committed to collaborating to find solutions to Chicago's growing water equity crisis;

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED, The City of Chicago shall invest American Rescue Act funds to install water meters, prioritizing low-income/underserved communities with older infrastructure and larger bills.

¹ BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Chicago shall invest American Rescue Act funds to fix water leaks, prioritizing low-income/underserved communities with older infrastructure and larger bills.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Where financially feasible, based on income verification and established government poverty levels, the City of Chicago shall absorb the cost of the leak repairs, utilizing American Rescue Act funds, retrieving those funds in a payment plan only if the property owner is deemed financially able to pay.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The City of Chicago should develop and present a water meter and leak repair program to City Council within two months, outlining milestones, deliverables, and due dates.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The City of Chicago should present in the same presentation their assessment of CIPP pilot to demonstrate why such a widely utilized technology, which saves significant money and reduces disruption, cannot be employed in Chicago.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The City of Chicago should study and present in the same presentation the potential for saving further money by addressing lead service pipes in concert with leak repairs and water meters, combining public and private labor and American Rescue Act, State, and City funding to achieve timely implementation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Chicago City Counsel will create a Special Committee on Water Equity to partner with Mayor Lightfoot and the Department of Water Management to guide in the advancement of water equity and the implementation of this resolution. The Special Committee on Water Equity will be comprised of representatives of the Health and Human relations committee members, experienced contractors and advocates

KJ/t7t6

Byron Sigcho-Lopez Alderman, 25th Ward

CITY OF CHICAGO
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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK ANNA M. VALENCIA

Chicago City Council Co-Sponsor Form

R2021-1304

Adding Co-Sponsor to " Call for investment of American Rescue Act funds to install water meters and repair water leaks prioritizing low-income/underserved communities"

Adding Co-Sponsor(s)

Please ADD Co-Sponsor(s) Shown Below - (Principal Sponsor's Consent Required)

Daniel LaSpata

Alderman

(Signature)

Date Filed: 18 January 2022

(Signature)

*Removing Co-Sponsor(s) Please REMOVE Co-Sponsor(s) Below- (Principal Sponsor's
Consent NOT Required)*

fl lWard^

(Signature)

Alderman

(Signature)

Date Filed:

Final Copies To Be Filed With: • Chairman of Committee to which legislation was referred
• City Clerk

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