



### **A Note from WSSC Water's Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO):**

The Maryland General Assembly convened to begin its 442<sup>nd</sup> Legislative Session on January 13, 2021. Delegate Adrienne Jones has been re-elected to serve as Speaker of the House and Senator Bill Ferguson has been re-elected as President of the Senate. This will be an unprecedented Legislative Session as the COVID-19 pandemic has forced most of the legislature's work, except floor sessions, to be conducted virtually.

The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the major topics for the Session to include assistance for residents and businesses impacted by the pandemic, educational funding, police reforms, and addressing health disparities in the State of Maryland.

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** will continue its role in advocating for legislation that supports the work of WSSC Water. **IRO** covers a variety of subject matter and focuses on legislation that helps advance WSSC Water's mission to provide safe and reliable water, life's most precious resource, and return clean water to our environment, all in an ethical, sustainable, and financially responsible manner. IRO looks at all legislation that impacts WSSC Water's administrative, operational and financial capability.

*The Annapolis Observer* is **IRO's** weekly update on happenings in Annapolis and highlights the progress of key bills of interest to WSSC Water, as well as other information.

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## **Legislative Updates**

Find the status of and position on WSSC Water-related bills in our [Legislative Update \(PDF\)](#)

WSSC Water has introduced [MC/PG 102-21](#) – *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Board of Ethics – Financial Disclosure Statements – Late Fees* that will authorize the WSSC Board of Ethics to impose a fee to individuals who file late or fail to file a financial disclosure statement.

On January 7<sup>th</sup>, the Montgomery County House Delegation voted unanimously to pass [MC/PG 100-21](#) – *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Video Streaming and Archiving Meetings and Late Payment Charges*, Favorable with Amendments. The bill now moves to the Prince George's County House Delegation for consideration. Staff met with the bill sponsor to address concerns raised by the Commissioners and the bill, as amended, addresses those concerns.

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## **Around WSSC Water**

### **WSSC Water Continues Moratorium on Late Fees and Shut-Offs**

Months into the pandemic, WSSC Water is experiencing an increase in the amount of money owed to WSSC Water: As of the end of December 2020, there was \$64.1 million past-due accounts (approximately 90,000 accounts), compared to \$36 million past-due accounts (approximately 75,000 accounts) at the end of December 2019.

In spite of this, WSSC Water is committed to ensuring water is available to all customers during this public health crisis; as a result, WSSC Water continues **to suspend service shutoffs and waive late fees**. We have ramped up our assistance efforts to ensure that safe, clean water continues to reliably flow to customer's homes during these difficult times.

WSSC Water urges customers with past due bills to contact us to identify ways we can help. Learn more at: <https://www.wsscwater.com/contents/news/2020/wssc-water-continues-to-suspe-1.html?v=1530112740000>

### **WSSC Water is Here to Help – Affordability Programs**

WSSC Water is committed to making your water and sewer bills more affordable and has programs to help your constituents address financial challenges, including flexible payment plans, the Customer Assistance Program that waives quarterly fees and The Water Fund which helps with direct financial assistance. WSSC Water's commitment to assist our customers when they need it most is stronger than ever.

More information is available at [wsscwater.com/assistance](http://wsscwater.com/assistance). Our Customer Service Advisors are available Monday to Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. to customize a solution for you. **Get started by calling 301-206-4001 or email us at [custserv@wsscwater.com](mailto:custserv@wsscwater.com).** Se habla Español.

### **Latest Federal COVID-19 Funding Includes Assistance for Ratepayers**

WSSC Water and other water utilities are applauding Congress' decision to appropriate \$638 million in assistance for low-income water and wastewater customers as part of the most recent COVID-19 relief bill. WSSC Water strives to assist our most vulnerable customers; however, we receive no federal, state or local support for our customer assistance programs.

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## Calendar

January 21, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. – Prince George's County Bi-County Committee

- [MC/PG 100-21](#) – Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Video Streaming and Archiving Meetings and Late Payment Charges
- [MC/PG 102-21](#) – Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Board of Ethics –Financial Disclosure Statements – Late Fees

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## Related Links

[Maryland General Assembly](#)

- [Session Calendar \(PDF\)](#)
- [Track Legislation](#)

[Montgomery County Delegation](#)

[Prince George's County Delegation](#)

[Maryland Association of Counties](#)

[Maryland Municipal League](#)

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## About IRO

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** team works to promote the value of water and the value of WSSC Water; engage federal, state, county and local government and elected stakeholders and advocate for WSSC Water's strategic interests and priorities; and foster relationships with organizations and promote collaborative interests.

In Annapolis, the **IRO** team works with members to support administratively and fiscally responsible legislation, in addition to championing policy that benefits all water utilities throughout Maryland. WSSC Water is committed to increased statewide investment in water and wastewater infrastructure and sound regulatory initiatives.

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## Meet the IRO Team

**Karyn Riley, Esq.** – *IRO Director*

[Karyn.Riley@wsscwater.com](mailto:Karyn.Riley@wsscwater.com)

**Guy Andes** – *Government Relations Manager*  
State Affairs and Prince George's County Affairs

[Guy.Andes@wsscwater.com](mailto:Guy.Andes@wsscwater.com)

**Monica Marquina** – *Government Relations Manager*  
Municipal Affairs and Montgomery County Affairs

[Monica.Marquina@wsscwater.com](mailto:Monica.Marquina@wsscwater.com)

**Terry Walker-Morris** – *Administrative Professional*

[Terry.Walker-Morris@wsscwater.com](mailto:Terry.Walker-Morris@wsscwater.com)

## Contact Us

(301) 206-8228

[iro@wsscwater.com](mailto:iro@wsscwater.com)



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For over 100 years, WSSC Water has proudly served the citizens of Prince George's and Montgomery counties – providing drinking water that has always met strict Safe Drinking Water Act standards and protecting the environment through vital water resource recovery services. Our vision is to be THE world-class water utility, where excellent products and services are always on tap. [www.wsscwater.com](http://www.wsscwater.com)