

Communication from Public

Name: LIONEL MARES

Date Submitted: 09/03/2024 10:12 PM

Council File No: 24-0995

Comments for Public Posting: Please see attached opposition to this proposed rate increase Re: Public Hearing on Agenda Item 1 (CF 23-0600-S9) regarding the proposed five-year plan of Sewer Service Charge, Low Strength Sewer Service Charge, Quality Surcharge Fee, Sewerage Facilities Charge, Industrial Waste Fees and Septage Disposal Fees increases.

September 3, 2024

L.A. City Council
200 N. Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: 2023 Budget Recommendation / Sanitation / Fee Study / Preserve Operations
(Council File No. 23-0600-S9)

Hon. City Council Members:

I am writing in ***opposition*** to the proposed **Sewer Rate Increase**. The proposed Sewer Rate Increase will be very costly to low-income, working-class ratepayers (like me). I cannot afford to pay more in utility bills and taxes. The cost of living in the City of Los Angeles, California is already too expensive and unaffordable for many working-class residents.

Although I agree that infrastructure upgrades and improvements are necessary and vital, the burden shouldn't rest on the poor and working-class folks.

The City of Los Angeles, Department of Sanitation only conducted just **TWO** webinars! I participated in one of the webinars in July 2024. I don't think that most residents were even aware of the outreach. I don't think that the Sanitation Department conducted enough outreach to all ratepayers in the city of Los Angeles.

I was quoted in the [L.A. Daily News](#) (8/26/2024):

“Mares said he attended the first of two informational webinars about the proposed rate increases that the city hosted over the summer. But he's concerned many Angelenos may still have no idea about the proposal, especially with many people out of town during the summer.”

I don't think that at this time, the city should increase the rate until there is sufficient public input. Not enough people participated in the public hearing at last week's city council meeting.

I am concerned that the process is being rushed and that city officials are not giving enough time for a supplementary study on the impact of the rate increase.

“I think that most Angelenos might not be well informed. Some of them might have accidentally thrown out the protest forms, and I don’t think many Angelenos were aware of the webinars,” he said, adding that he’s concerned the process is being rushed.

Many people weren’t well informed about the proposed rate increase, and this amounts to a tax increase, which should require voter approval!

The Los Angeles City Council should reconsider until there is sufficient public outreach and any increase in utility bills and such should be placed on the ballot.

Therefore, I ask the city council to vote NO on the proposed Sewer Rate Increase. We cannot afford another tax without due process of law.

“Democracy Needs to be Heard.”

Respectfully,

Lionel Mares
Los Angeles, CA