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Your submission for this review:

Dear IPART, I am writing to express, with profound disappointment and grave concern, my strong opposition to the proposed price increases for Sydney Water Corporation, as meticulously detailed in your Draft Report. While I understand that utility providers have operational costs and infrastructure investment needs, the magnitude of these proposed hikes is not merely excessive; it is, frankly, unconscionable given the dire economic realities faced by countless households across New South Wales. We are not just experiencing a "cost of living crisis" in Australia; we are in the midst of an affordability catastrophe. For too long, wage growth has stagnated or barely kept pace with, and often fallen behind, the relentlessly climbing cost of essentials. The latest CPI figures indicate inflation rates around 2.4% annually, theoretically within the RBA's target. However, this headline figure masks the brutal reality on the ground. When core expenses like housing, food, and energy continue to surge at rates far exceeding average wage increases, the purchasing power of ordinary Australians is eroded daily. Households are already stretched to breaking point, forced to make impossible choices between putting food on the table, paying the rent, or keeping the lights on. Against this backdrop, proposing further significant increases to a fundamental, non-discretionary service like water is a direct affront to the financial stability and well-being of the community you are meant to serve. The idea that these increases go "beyond what seems justifiable by standard CPI or inflation measures" is a polite understatement. It suggests a fundamental disconnect from the lived experience of families whose budgets are already in crisis. If CPI and inflation are meant to reflect the general increase in costs, then any additional, substantial price escalation represents a real-terms decrease in household disposable income. This isn't just an adjustment; it's a profound cut to the standard of living for every single resident. We urge IPART to seriously and empathetically reconsider these proposed price increases. Your role is not merely to facilitate the financial interests of a utility provider, but to balance those interests against the fundamental right of every citizen to affordable access to essential services. A genuinely responsible approach would prioritize safeguarding households from further financial distress, ensuring that any adjustments are strictly limited to verified, efficient cost increases, truly aligned with, and ideally below, current inflation rates. To push forward with increases that will push more families into debt, hardship, and despair would be a dereliction of that critical duty. The people of New South Wales deserve transparent, accountable, and genuinely affordable utility pricing. We implore you to stand with the community, not against it, in these trying times. Thank you for considering these vital concerns, and we await a response that demonstrates a true understanding of the current economic pressures on ordinary Australians. Sincerely,