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Outrage Grows as WAPA's Excessive Billing Continues; Senator Carrion Calls for Immediate Action

Carrión urges WAPA to reissue bills after customers report extreme charges, with one ratepayer facing a jump from \$90 to \$923

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A recent WAPA bill published online by a ratepayer on September 11, 2024, showing a total amount due of \$923.73, a significant jump from the previous balance of \$90.22.

Senator Samuel Carrión is urging the V.I. Water & Power Authority to reissue its recent utility bills following a surge in complaints from customers facing unusually high charges. WAPA recently expanded its customer service hours to manage the influx of billing complaints, with many customers reporting bills that are double or even triple their usual amounts.

The frustration of ratepayers is evident, as seen in a recent bill shared online by a customer on September 11, 2024. The bill displayed an unexpected total amount due of \$923.73, a stark increase from the previous balance of just \$90.22. The ratepayer voiced their outrage, questioning the appropriate channel for filing a complaint against WAPA. "Someone please remind me who I file a complaint with over this colossal pile of horse sh#t. Is it the PSC [Public Services Commission]? WAPA really has the audacity," the customer stated.

"There is a clear and obvious problem here," Senator Carrión stated. He criticized WAPA's approach to handling the situation, arguing that the utility should not force hundreds of customers to visit its offices to resolve these discrepancies. According to Carrión, the utility's computers are capable of identifying which customers were issued unusually high bills and should be used to automatically recalculate and correct the charges.

"Rather than forcing hundreds of customers to come into the WAPA offices and paying WAPA employees overtime to handle all these complaints, WAPA must recalculate these bills," Carrión added. "Given all this utility's failures, it is the very least it can do for the people of this Territory."

Senator Carrión is appealing to the WAPA board and management to take immediate action to correct the recent billing errors. He proposed a straightforward solution: "It is simple – if anyone received a bill that is more than double what they typically pay – send out a new bill." He suggested that customers who still have concerns after receiving recalculated bills could then visit customer service offices for further assistance.

Carrión argued that WAPA's current response to the issue is inefficient and burdensome for ratepayers. "They are literally forcing hundreds of ratepayers to come into their office because of WAPA's mistakes. This does not make sense! They just need to fix the errors!" he asserted. Carrión also pointed out that the cost of recalculating and reissuing the bills would likely be less than the expense of paying customer service agents overtime for an extended period, which WAPA currently plans to do.