

My name is Paula Epperley. I've lived in San Diego most of my life. I am a licensed vocational nurse and I have been a caregiver since 2001. I am here to demand the Water Board stops water shut offs and make the assistance program way more than 20%, which is practically a slap in the face.

We have something here that is essential to survival. It's not something we want. It's something we need. In my situation, I have a child who is disabled. My son was born with colonic enercia otherwise known as Ghersprungs Disease. It's a disease of the bowel and requires treatments through the colon twice a day. There is medical equipment that we must clean several times a day or he risks infection and hospitalization. In addition, my son showers three times a day because the maintenance of the medical treatment involves fecal matter and if he doesn't shower he risks infection and hospitalization. In addition to that, my son requires a sleep apnea machine which requires water to operate, and also requires water for cleaning and maintenance of the filters and tubing. Both of these are life-savings medical apparatus. To know that someone could come in to my house and shut off the one thing that my son needs to survive is beyond my comprehension. If I do not clean my son or care for him it is called negligence. If the *government* comes into my house and cuts off the water why is that different? Isn't the government being negligent? My son didn't ask to be sick.

Last December, my mother was dying in my house. She was receiving round the clock hospice care and when my family came to care for her we found past-due bills including her water bill and had no means to pay it. We found assistance to pay for *some* of the bill and still the city CUT OFF HER WATER while she was dying in my house. My sister Arlene called the water department who said the bill was in collections. Arlene went and sat in the office of collections and explained that the city had cut off the water to a woman that was dying and the city would do NOTHING. She talked to supervisors and no one would offer assistance. Strangers that were in line behind Arlene – who had their own past-due bills to pay – all pitched in to donate money to put the water back on. Do you understand this? *Strangers* helped us out when the city that we pay taxes to and that we elect refused to help us out.

So first, the State Water Board must STOP water shut offs throughout the state. Second, our water bills have *doubled* over the past 10 years. You need to help out with a lot more than 20% to make a difference. And you can not charge other working people more taxes to pay for this program. Go after big corporations who can afford to pay, that get out of paying billions of dollars in taxes. Don't go after smaller people like us and make it look like you're doing us a favor. We'll pay for it anyway through our taxes. It's a scam. We're always taught to do unto others what you would have them do unto you. So unless you're willing to live without water for a week yourselves, then you must understand you can not take someone's water away.