



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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I would like to take this opportunity to express my extreme displeasure with the way the City of Cleveland is trying to punish or scare Westlake residents and businesses through mass mailings and articles in the media simply because we have requested proposals from the City of Cleveland and Avon Lake Utilities to be joint suppliers of bulk water to Westlake. We have not terminated any agreement and simply wish to consider all alternatives.

We have been one of Cleveland's largest and best customers for decades despite many service issues, lack of infrastructure investment and rising water charges. Even though I have requested numerous times to become a master-metered city as permitted by Article 14 of the existing contract, Cleveland has been unable to provide us with a draft agreement and instead continues to request us to execute a new agreement that would require us to surrender more than 65 million dollars in city owned (taxpayer assets) waterlines or infrastructure at no cost and in addition sign an agreement to share new taxes generated by relocated businesses to Westlake. This is not the way to treat any of your customers.

This type of agreement is unacceptable to us (especially since we have spent millions of taxpayers' money replacing or upgrading these waterlines over the last decade alone).

We desire the ability to be able to purchase water from both the City of Cleveland and Avon Lake Utilities to assure our residents of a safe and economical water supply. Unfortunately rather than meet to negotiate an individual agreement, the City of Cleveland is attempting to force a "one agreement fits all" upon us. In addition, they are using bullying and monopolistic tactics to scare residents with unsubstantiated claims about future water charges.

As Mayor of Westlake it is my duty and obligation to act in the best interest of our residents and businesses which is exactly what we feel would be achieved if the city has more than one supplier of water to serve our great community.

This country is founded on the freedom and the right to make choices. We in Westlake will do whatever is necessary to protect that right to choose our water supplier. This should be no different than our right to choose our gas or electric supplier.

I look forward to a positive response from the City of Cleveland and Avon Lake Utilities to assure our residents of a safe, reliable and economical source of water as a potential supplier of this important commodity. We will continue to pursue all alternatives to purchase water for our citizens.