

Statement from MAWSS Concerning Legislation Relating to Prichard Water Board

For several years, the Concerned Citizens of Prichard have asked that the Prichard Water Board and Sewer System be dissolved and they be allowed to become customers of Mobile Area Water and Sewer System. MAWSS sells all of the water used by the Prichard system, which also serves the citizens of Chickasaw, yet their customers are charged higher rates for their water than MAWSS customers.

Responding to this customer led initiative, Sen. Vivian Figures sponsored and was successful in passing a bill that would allow the customers of Prichard and MAWSS to vote on dissolving the Prichard Water Works and Sewer Board and transferring the assets and customers to MAWSS. A majority vote by both systems' customers is needed to approve the merger. The bill protects current MAWSS customers by prohibiting any rate increase related to the merge of the Prichard system.

MAWSS plans to reduce the rates of Prichard customers by reducing overhead and administrative costs. Prichard currently contracts with a private company, Severn Trent, to operate its system. MAWSS can operate their system for less. Well run public utilities have been proven to be more cost effective than contract services. The MAWSS system will benefit by adding about 12,000 new customers which will help contain costs as the system tackles new projects in the area.

A vote on this issue will take place in November 2012. Before that time, MAWSS will be sharing information and answering questions about this merger. MAWSS looks at this as an opportunity to strengthen our community's economic prospects, provide equitable rates to all customers and better serve the community.