

Letters: Merge LIPA and water districts

September 3, 2012



Regarding "Let's consolidate LI power and water" [Opinion, Aug. 24], business leader Kevin Law's suggestion to merge the [Long Island Power Authority](#) with [Long Island's](#) water suppliers makes a lot of sense. It would be less costly to have one entity read the meters every month.

However, there is no guarantee that any savings would be passed on to the customers. Moreover, there are many water suppliers, some private and others public. They all take

the same water from the same aquifers in the same way, treat it the same way, and transport it to our homes and businesses, but they charge differing rates.

As a customer of a private water company, I have been informed that my bills are nine times those of other residents. One would think that the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment would prohibit this unequal treatment of [Long Islanders](#). However, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals determined in *Srail v. the Village of Lisle* (Ill.) that the denial of public water to some residents of an area does not rise to the level of denial of a fundamental right unless the victims belong to a particular race or religion. It would require Supreme Court review to overturn the decision.

The private water suppliers will not leave quietly for a merger with LIPA.

Saul I. Weinstein, Woodmere

Kudos to Kevin Law on the idea of creating a two-county authority to handle our water and power needs, with the intent of giving the taxpayers potential relief.

How about launching a study to see what would be required to consolidate [Nassau](#) and [Suffolk's](#) 120-plus school districts into, say, six regional school districts? What kind of tax relief would that net the taxpayer?

Bob Hall, Port Jefferson Station

Kevin Law is correct in his call for consolidation. [Long Island](#) needs to start dismantling the

fiefdoms that have arisen as a result of fragmented policy for the last 60 years.

Our regional groundwater resource is complex and is directly affected by decisions made daily on a very local level. It is crucial for Long Island to think regionally, and take a big-picture view of the management of our utilities and water.

Water and energy policy decisions transcend political borders, and we need to ensure our future policies do the same. We must break free of our current 20th-century approach.

Rich Murdocco, [Setauket](#)

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