

Dear GEAA members and friends,

Another bill that would allow clear cutting of trees by developers will be heard on Tuesday, March 26th. [HB 1858](#), sponsored by Hill Country [Representative, Paul Workman](#), would allow a developer to destroy any tree, even ancient heritage oaks, without getting prior approval. All that is required is for the developer to “believe” that the trees present a fire risk. Because a landowner’s “beliefs” cannot be disputed, this bill creates a loophole that nullifies tree protection rules enforced by cities across Texas and opens the door for massive clear cutting of development sites.

We urge you to contact the members of the House Committee on Business and Industry to voice your opposition to HB 1858.

- [Rep. René Oliveira](#)
- [Rep. Eddie Rodriguez](#)
- [Rep. Armando Walle](#)
- [Rep. Dwayne Bohac](#)
- [Rep. Rob Orr](#)

It is important to note that this bill does little to reduce the risk of house fires. There are only 2 or 3 ordinances in Texas that require homeowners to obtain permits for removing trees. San Antonio’s tree ordinance does not apply to homeowners, only to developers.

The City of Bastrop does not even have a tree ordinance, yet it was hit with the most destructive wildfire in state history. Clearly, HB 1858 is a solution in search of a problem.

Actions that compromise San Antonio and Austin’s tree preservation ordinances could result in the following consequences:

- increase ozone levels potentially putting these cities in violation of clear air standards and causing serious health problems for children and our elderly,
- increase stormwater runoff and flooding,
- contribute to contaminating stormwater runoff which recharges the Edwards Aquifer,
- and, in San Antonio, drive endangered species onto Camp Bullis which could force Joint Base San Antonio (which employ 83,000 San Antonians

with a \$46 billion economic impact) to close and relocate to another area or state.

Thank you for taking action. Please feel free to forward this message.

Annalisa Peace

Executive Director

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