

Dear GEAA members and friends,

[The Interim Report of the House Committee on Land and Resource Management](#) has some overall good news in regards to what might or might not come up during the 83rd session.

Among other charges, the [committee](#) was directed to “Examine current regulatory authority available to municipalities in their extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ)” and to “Make necessary legislative recommendations to ensure a proper balance between development activities and municipal regulations.”

We had dreaded the prospect that [two bills filed last session](#) that would have prohibited Texas cities from enforcing tree ordinances in their ETJ’s would be refilled this session. The interim report stated that most of the testimony provided to the committee focused on a specific tree ordinance in the City of San Antonio. Thanks to the City of San Antonio and the Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston for testifying in defense of SA’s ordinance.

While troubling that the committee “had concerns regarding excessive and abusive regulations which impede or deny property owners their right to develop land as they see fit”, they also recommended that “these regulations should be addressed with targeted, local bills brought by members who represent the area affected by the regulations.” We would hope that none of our San Antonio delegation will file such a bill. But, we will be keeping an eye out and will keep you posted.

The committee was also charged to “Examine the effectiveness of the Texas Private Real Property Rights Preservation Act”. The TPRPRPA (whew!), which was passed in 1995 in response to San Antonio and Austin water quality ordinances, currently exempts cities under the Act. Despite lengthy testimony from vested interests who oppose the exemption of cities, the committee recommended that the Act remain as is, citing “the unintended consequences on municipalities using legitimate public policy oriented regulations.”

I will continue to keep you up to date, and to call on you to take action when needed during this Legislative Session. With all the attention being paid to water (or, lack of it) this will certainly be a busy session for us. The diversity of our Alliance is recognized by our Legislators, and really gives heft to GEAA's shared agenda – so, a big thanks to all of you for your participation in GEAA!

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