April 5, 2019

House Committee on Energy Resources

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         Rep. Tom Craddick
         Rep. Drew Darby
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         Rep. Cody Harris
         Rep. Mary Ann Perez

RE: HB 2871

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Energy Resources,

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) supports HB 2871 relating to the regulation of certain aggregate production operations by the Railroad Commission of Texas; authorizing a fee; providing administrative penalties and other civil remedies; creating criminal offenses.

Rock crushers have an enormous impact on the human and natural environment, not only through the effects of particulate matter (PM) on air quality and surrounding communities, but also to the health of the Edwards Aquifer and the water quality of Texas’s groundwater and surface water resources. Millions of users depend on the Edwards Aquifer (a sole source aquifer) for drinking water and recreation, and several endangered species exist only in the aquifer. Any pollution caused by the aggregate industry will negatively affect downstream users and the endangered species. Mining of aquifer limestone, pollution and pumping of groundwater, effects on the wells of adjacent landowners, are issues that go largely unaddressed under the current regulatory scheme, which only provides for storm water discharge permits and air quality permits.

We urge you to send this excellent bill for a vote of the House. Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Respectfully,

Annalisa Peace

GEAA is a non-profit coalition of grassroots organizations across the Edwards Aquifer united to preserve the water, wildlife, scenic beauty, and cultural heritage of the Edwards Aquifer and the Texas Hill Country.
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