

April 30, 2025

Honored Members of the San Antonio and Bexar County Texas Legislature Delegation

Re: House Bill 24/Senate Bill 844, An Act Relating to Procedures for Changes to a Zoning Regulation or District Boundary

Honored Members,

The [Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance](#) (GEAA) appreciates the opportunity to submit this letter in support of House Bill 24 and Senate Bill 844. We would like to encourage you to **vote yes on HB 24 and SB 844** as they come up in hearings and on the floor.

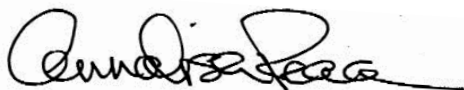
Texas is facing a housing crisis, and an outdated state law is holding cities back from being part of the solution. This housing crisis is contributing to the sprawl of new housing developments over former agricultural and conservation lands and open spaces. To learn more about aspects of the housing crisis and solutions that can help lower costs while ensuring water supplies are protected, please [see our report here](#).

Right now, just one landowner can potentially block new housing within city limits, even when a majority of an elected city council votes to approve it. HB 24/SB 844 fixes this issue. The bill raises the protest threshold to 60% of adjacent land owners from 20%, restores majority rule for zoning votes, and protects cities from lawsuits. It is a common-sense update that gives cities the tools they need to plan effectively. The bill still protects property rights and due process, while making zoning processes fairer and more democratic.

Allowing cities to reform land use regulations for more density could provide environmental benefits by reducing the number of agricultural lands and open space lost to residential sprawl. By lowering barriers to such reforms, the bill could also allow communities to increase density in ways that make it easier for families to stay in the same neighborhoods by not pricing out successive generations. Lowering the valid petition threshold also ensures that projects that are supported by a majority of residents and elected officials do not lose out on critical state and federal funding.

This bill could have prevented the unfortunate situation in San Antonio, where the [valid petition process blocked the construction](#) of the Vista Park apartments, an affordable housing community. These apartments would have provided many San Antonio residents with affordable residences close to jobs and transit, offered childcare for their children, and prevented the need for further sprawl or of industrial development of that parcel. The city subsequently [lost out on \\$20 million in state housing tax credits](#). HB 24/SB 844 would help ensure that a similar scenario is much less likely. (Read more [here](#) and [here](#)). For this reason, we encourage you to **vote yes on HB 24 and SB 844**.

Thank you for your consideration. Please consider GEAA as a resource that is at your disposal. We look forward to working with you on this issue.



Annalisa Peace, Executive Director



Rachel Hanes, Policy Director

Act Now Comal
Alamo, Austin, and Lone Star chapters of the Sierra Club
Bexar Audubon Society
Bexar and Travis-Austin Green Parties
Bexar Grotto
Boerne Together
Bulverde Neighborhood Alliance
Bulverde Neighborhoods for Clean Water
Cibolo Center for Conservation
Citizens for the Protection of Cibolo Creek
Comal Conservation
Comfort Neighbors
Congregation of Divine Providence
Environment Texas
First Universalist Unitarian Church of SA
Fitzhugh Neighbors
Friends of Canyon Lake
Friends of Castroville Regional Park
Friends of Dry Comal Creek
Friends of Government Canyon
Fuerza Unida
Green Society of UTSA
Guadalupe Riverkeepers
Guadalupe River Road Alliance
Guardians of Lick Creek
Hays Residents for Land & Water Protection
Headwaters at Incarnate Word
Helotes Heritage Association
Hill Country Alliance
Kerr County Water Alliance
Kendall County Well Owners Association
Las Moras Springs Association
Leon Springs Business Association
Llano River Watershed Alliance
Native Plant Society of Texas -- NB
Native Plant Society of Texas -- SA
Northwest Interstate Coalition of Neighborhoods
Pedernales River Alliance -- Gillespie Co.
Preserve Castroville
Preserve Lake Dunlop Association
Preserve Our Hill Country Environment
River Aid San Antonio
San Antonio Audubon Society
San Antonio Conservation Society
San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance
San Marcos River Foundation
Save Barton Creek Association
Save Our Springs Alliance
Scenic Loop/Boerne Stage Alliance
Securing a Future Environment (SAFE)
SEED Coalition
Signal Hill Area Alliance
Solar San Antonio
Texans for Environmental Awareness
Texas Cave Management Association
Trinity Edwards Spring Protection Assoc.
Water Aid -- Texas State University
Watershed Association
Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation