

August 21, 2025

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

The Honorable Ken King, Chair  
The Honorable Armando Martinez, Vice Chair  
The Honorable Members Bonnen, Darby, Johnson, Louderback, Moody,  
Virdell, and Wilson

**Re: House Bill 117, An Act Relating to the Authority of a County to  
Regulate Impervious Cover in the Unincorporated Area of the County**

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of the Edwards and Trinity aquifers, their springs, watersheds, and the Texas Hill Country that sustains them. Our alliance has 62 member groups across 21 counties in the Texas Hill Country region. We work in this field to ensure the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all those who rely on these sources of water. **As such, GEAA strongly supports House Bill 117.**

Counties are not currently granted the authority to limit impervious cover, and yet limiting impervious cover in hydrologically sensitive areas is exceedingly critical to protecting Texan lives, property, and water quality. Much of our state's growth is occurring in the unincorporated areas of our counties, as are many of the impacts from flooding events. Texas counties need more tools to appropriately protect their residents, visitors, businesses, water, and economies. HB 117 provides one such critical tool.

Impervious cover can contribute to increased runoff and can put people and property in harm's way. By decreasing the ability of the ground to infiltrate stormwater, impervious cover can lead to significant increases in the volume and velocity of flooding. The June 2025 flooding event that tragically led to the deaths of 13 people in San Antonio was likely exacerbated by impervious cover upstream. And although impervious cover did not likely contribute to the force of the horrific flood on July 4<sup>th</sup> in the Hill Country, the amount of structures and infrastructure in the floodplains, most of which are in unincorporated areas of those counties, almost certainly contributed to the high number of casualties.

With increasing impervious cover, cities, counties, and other local authorities must also spend more of their limited budgets on flood preparation and prevention, emergency responses, new water supplies, and more expensive water treatments. We have participated in and facilitated multiple discussions with county officials and residents; many of them would like to see more authority granted to counties to protect residents and local water supplies. HB 117 does just that.

Thank you for your consideration, we look forward to working with you on this issue.



Rachel Hanes, Policy Director