



ACTION ALERT

State/Local Relations—County Authority

The following bill was voted favorably out of the County Affairs Committee and is now in Calendars. It has to move quickly to the House floor for a vote in order to have time to make its way through the Senate before the close of the session:

HB 3265 (Rose, Miller, Gallego) SUPPORT

This bill gives counties in the Hill Country the option of creating a local plan which would have to be approved by voters in order do sensible land-use management in the unincorporated areas of their county. Because 90% of the region is unincorporated, water supplies are limited, and infrastructure is often insufficient for projected growth, it is vital that local governments be granted this authority. The measures allowed in the bill include: density limits, setbacks, and infrastructure cost recovery fees. These steps would prevent incompatible developments such as a rock quarry or industrial plant from moving in just over a homeowner's property line. The burden on current taxpayers is less when growth is planned and cost recovery fees for the necessary infrastructure improvements are included in the development process.

The concept of property rights must be defined to include all of us. It must not be distorted to allow unchecked sprawl and depletion of limited natural resources.

HB 3265 is supported by a coalition of County Judges, Commissioners, and Attorneys who have worked for two years to build consensus. As a result, 13 Hill Country Counties have passed resolutions stating the need for such legislation.

TAKE ACTION NOW

Presidents of Local Leagues that are represented on the Calendars Committee (see list below) are requested to contact their representative(s) in the name of the League TODAY by phone or email with the following message;

League members whose representatives are on the Calendars Committee (see list below) should contact their representatives as individuals TODAY by phone or email with the following message:

Urge them to vote favorably on HB 3265. Tell them you support allowing the Hill Country counties to do sensible planning in their unincorporated areas. Remind them that a local plan would have to be approved by local voters, and that this jewel of Texas is too important to lose to unrestrained sprawl.

Any member who is interested in sensible land-use management is requested to call any or all the members of the Calendars Committee to move this bill onto the House Agenda. The committee is receiving many negative calls from developers. Numbers of calls will make a difference between having this bill voted on in the House or not.

Calendars Committee members:

Rep. Brian McCall (Chair) *Plano*; Rep. Eddie Lucio, III (Vice Chair) *San Benito*; Rep. Norma Chavez, *El Paso*; Rep. Garnet Coleman, *Houston*; Rep. Byron Cook, *Corsicana*; Rep. Brandon Creighton, *Conroe*; Rep. Charlie Geren, *Fort Worth*; Rep. Jim Keffer, *Eastland*; Rep. Lois Kolkhorst, *Brenham*; Rep. Edmund Kuempel, *Seguin*; Rep. Jim McReynolds, *Lufkin*; Rep. Allan Ritter, *Nederland*; Rep. Burt Solomons, *Carrollton*.

Phone numbers and email addresses can be found at

<http://www.house.state.tx.us/members/welcome.php>

For more information, refer to the Advocacy Paper on County Authority

www.lwvtexas.org/ADV/2009AdvPaper-County%20Authority.pdf

Questions can be directed to Karen Rankin, State/Local Relations Chair at karenrankin@austin.rr.com