

June 30, 2025

Senate Bill 1253 Press Release

Senate Bill 1253 was a simple bill that did two things that were great for water conservation. It provided developers and builders with a financial incentive to incorporate water conservation into their buildings. And it provided a predictable, reliable, ordinary funding mechanism to western Hays County's groundwater conservation district.

The bill would have provided stronger groundwater property rights protection to every well owner in western Hays County instead of only those on the eastern side, and especially to the exempt household wells of thousands and thousands of homeowners who rely on the Trinity Aquifer as their sole water source.

The water district language in this bill was unanimously passed by the Texas Senate and by a very large majority in the House. It was wholly supported by the groundwater community of western Hays County and enjoyed unanimous bi-partisan support from the Hays County Commissioners Court, the City of Woodcreek, and the City of Wimberley.

Senator Charles Perry, Chairman of the Senate Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs Committee -- the torch bearer for solving the water supply crisis facing the State, recognized that this Groundwater District, one of Texas' original Priority Groundwater Management Areas, had to have financial help to defend against increasing legal challenges, and now. Despite broad community support, including that of our local Senator, large water utility lobbyists were able to secure a last-minute veto.

When asked about the need for this bill Hays County Commissioner Walt Smith said, *"Protection of existing groundwater property rights are a top priority for the community, and corporate lobbyists were able to secure their multi-million-dollar client's special interests at the expense of this community's. Ask yourself if a poorly funded Groundwater Conservation District will be able to protect your water from another Electro-Purification type water grab, or from Aqua America's local outfit profiteering instead of fixing aging, leaky infrastructure. Ask yourself if your water well is safe from large for-profit utilities and their obligations to send a chunk of your water bill out of the community to Wall Street. Ask yourself who is looking out for your water supply. It's your local groundwater conservation district."*

Groundwater is a scarce and vital resource and a significant part of our community's property values. It is also a shared resource, despite individual ownership by every property owner in Texas. Groundwater Conservation Districts serve the vital role of sustainable groundwater management for all users, big and small. Across the state, Groundwater Conservation Districts have existed for decades to support the communities they serve. Ultimately, this veto served no one.



Charlie Flatten, General Manager
Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District



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