



SAN ANTONIO CONSERVATION SOCIETY

March 9, 2017

The Honorable Joe Straus, III
Speaker, Texas House of Representatives
P O Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

Dear Speaker Straus:

The San Antonio Conservation Society was founded in 1924 to help conserve the architecture, heritage and natural beauty of our region. We are a group of 1,700 members actively engaged in our organization and community. Our Society has worked 93 years to save San Antonio's historic trees; and, we remain strongly in favor of San Antonio's Tree Ordinance in the Unified Development Code, adopted over 20 years ago. We have worked with the City to promote the enforcement of the ordinance and we have been actively involved in revisions to the ordinance in 2001, 2003, 2006 and 2010.

SB 782 and HB 2535, introduced in the Texas Legislature, imperil this ordinance and the economic, environmental and scenic value it brings to our city and region. SB 898, SB 1092 and HB1572 similarly threaten the San Antonio Tree Ordinance.

The San Antonio Conservation Society is adamantly opposed to these attempts to weaken or thwart the Tree Ordinance that so many have worked on for so long. There are two major reasons:

First, it is a fundamental principle that local land use decisions are not dictated by the state. We resent this attempt to take land-use decisions away from local government. This proposed legislation would prevent cities and counties from passing local ordinances that deal with tree removal and protection. We have worked with the voters/taxpayers and officials in San Antonio and Bexar County for decades to secure the Tree Ordinance which protects our community's character, health and environment.

Second, trees are the heart and defining feature of the Hill Country, from Boerne to Fredericksburg and Kerrville. The tree canopy is an important issue in San Antonio and Bexar County, where trees are not only a defining feature, but also provide shade from the South Texas sun and heat. Trees help prevent erosion and water runoff, which can lead to flooding. Other parts of the state have a different environment, and thus this legislation may not have a similar effect in West Texas or the Panhandle. In South Texas, the effect will be devastating.

How will these bills affect cities and counties that have adopted a tree ordinance? Please vote NO on these bills!

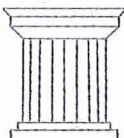
Sincerely,



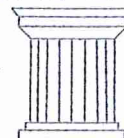
Janet Dietel, President

cc: Mayor Ivy Taylor, City Council; City Manager, Sheryl Sculley, Judge Nelson Wolff

107 KING WILLIAM STREET + SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78204-1312 + 210/224-6163 + FAX: 210/224-6168



The Purpose of this Society is to preserve and to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, objects, places and customs, relating to the history of Texas, its natural beauty, and all that is admirably distinctive to our State; and by such physical and cultural preservation to keep the history of Texas legible and intact to educate the public, especially the youth of today and tomorrow, with knowledge of our inherited regional values.



The Honorable Donna Campbell
Texas Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711-2068

The Honorable Jose Menendez
Texas Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711-2068

The Honorable Carlos Uresti
Texas Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711-2068

The Honorable Judith Zaffirini
Texas Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711-2068

The Honorable Justin Rodriguez
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

The Honorable Roland Gutierrez
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

The Honorable Lyle Larson
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

The Honorable Diego Bernal
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

The Honorable Ina Minjarez
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

The Honorable Barbara Gervin-Hawkins
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

The Honorable Philip Cortez
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

The Honorable Tomas Uresti
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

The Honorable Diana Arevalo
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910