



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AUSTIN

October 30, 2009

VIA FAX: (512) 239-5533

Chairman Bryan Shaw
Commissioner Buddy Garcia
Commissioner Carlos Rubinstein

RE: TCEQ Docket No. 2009-1586-RUL. Consideration of a petition for rulemaking under Section 20.15 of 30 TAC Chapter 20, Rulemaking.

Dear Chairman Shaw, Commissioner Garcia and Commissioner Rubinstein:

We are writing in opposition to the above referenced petition for rulemaking submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality by the Cities of Leander and Granite Shoals, related to the current prohibition of discharging reclaimed water into the Highland Lakes. We support TCEQ staff's recommendation that the petition be denied at this time.

Recent modeling by the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) concluded that the additional disposal of wastewater into Lake Travis would negatively impact the lake's water quality, with a notable increase in algae at several locations. More than 1 million Central Texans rely on Lake Travis for their drinking water, and algae growth would likely decrease clarity in the lake and could result in taste and odor problems associated with the drinking water supply from the lake.

In addition, the U.S. Geological Survey has identified troubling levels of pharmaceutical compounds in treated wastewater effluent. We are concerned that there is no current technology that removes these compounds from treated wastewater. Consequently, this past session we passed SB 1757, authored by Senator Kirk Watson and Rep. Donna Howard, mandating that TCEQ study methods for safely handling and disposing of such medical waste.

We recommend that TCEQ incorporate the results of this study into any stakeholder process you may convene that might result in any modifications to the Highland Lakes watershed rules.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if we can provide more information on this issue.

Sincerely,



Rep. Elliott Naishtat



Rep. Dawnna Dukes



Rep. Eddie Rodriguez



Rep. Donna Howard