

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Land & Resource Management
For HB 5217

Compiled on: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 7:02 PM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: April 19, 2023 8:00 AM

Debbie Clark
Citizen
Hempstead, TX
Protect our citizens rights

Cynthia Segovia, Mrs
self
Garden Ridge, TX

I am opposed to proposed bill 5217. I believe that this will further degrade our resources, especially our already depleted water supply. We must find ways to develop our state with an eye towards our future and our children and grandchildren's future.

Albert Segovia, Mr
self
Garden Ridge, TX

I am opposed to allowing land developers circumvent protections for our water resources.

Mobi Warren
Self, retired teacher
San Antonio, TX

I am horrified by the destructive implications of HB 5217 and urge you to vote against it. HB 5217 would nullify 410,000 acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and 46,000 acres of its aquifer protection ordinance.

This bill would let developers clear-cut trees, even giant heritage oaks, anywhere in the ETJ. Since the vast majority of property inside San Antonio's (CoSA's) city limits is already developed, the ETJ is where nearly all development of raw, natural land occurs. In other words, if this bill passes, CoSA's tree ordinance will be all but worthless.

In addition, developers could ignore the 15% impervious cover limit prescribed by the aquifer protection ordinance, as well as protections for creeks, caves and recharge features. There are approximately 46,000 acres of recharge zone in the ETJ. While some of that land is already developed, there are still thousands of acres of natural land available for future housing subdivisions and commercial buildings.

The taxpayers of San Antonio have spent hundreds of millions of dollars buying 175,293 acres of land and conservation easements to protect the Edwards Aquifer. This bill will give recharge zone developers, whose properties discharge contaminated runoff, a free ride by exempting them from aquifer protection rules. Taxpayers will bear the entire burden of protecting the aquifer.

As a lifelong citizen of San Antonio, I care deeply about protecting the health and beauty of this place I love and have called home for over 60 years. This bill would cause irreparable harm to our quality of life. It would allow the fouling of our air and water. Please do not let this bill go forward.

Miranda Rice
Self
Floresville, TX

I am opposed to HB 5217. It is not ok to allow developers to clear cut trees thus ignoring rules intended to best help the people, environment and the sustainability of both.

Sarah Desousa
Private Citizen
Spring Branch, TX

I strongly oppose the passage of HB 5217. HB 5217 will allow landowners to unilaterally release their property from any Texas city's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). It would nullify 410,000 acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and 46,000 acres of its aquifer protection ordinance. The bill is unfair to taxpayers as well. This bill will give recharge zone developers, whose properties discharge contaminated runoff, a free ride by exempting them from aquifer protection rules. Taxpayers will bear the entire burden of protecting the aquifer.

Donna Bahlinger
Self
San Antonio, TX

I would like to express my opposition to HB 5217. HB 5217 would nullify protection of 46,000 acres over the Edwards Recharge Zone. This bill would allow developers to ignore current protections for caves, creeks, and recharge features. This bill is detrimental to the environment and ultimately harmful to people living in this area. I respectfully ask that the committee members reconsider this harmful bill. Thank you.

JOHN HERTZ

John B. Hertz Architect
San Antonio, TX

As a long time San Antonio resident (40 + years), I am in total opposition to this bill. As most of San Antonio's growth has taken place within its borders, all out current and future growth is occurring in the Extra Territorial Areas. This bill would allow clear-cutting of all trees in the ETJ, nullifying all the efforts and money the city has spent to protect this area. As well, it will exempt landowners from having to comply with the Edward's Aquifer recharge protection. This bill is just plain bad. Please do not give it support. Thank you!

Richard Alles, PE (retired)
self - Professional Engineer (retired)
SAN ANTONIO, TX

Please vote against HB 5217 relating to release of an area from a municipality 's extraterritorial jurisdiction by petition or election.

First, there is no "regulation without representation" in San Antonio's ETJ. This argument is a red herring.

HB 5217 primarily benefits limited-liability corporations, and homebuilding corporations from places like California, Michigan and Dallas. These entities can't vote in city elections in the first place. In fact, the vast majority of ETJ residents have essentially no city regulations to comply with. ETJ regulations are for land developers and builders.

ETJ residents can't vote because they don't pay city taxes. Yet, they are free to take advantage of natural areas, city parks, streets and venues that city taxpayers paid for.

In addition, ETJ residents are represented by their County Commissioners on ETJ regulations. So they do have "representation". Any city development codes applicable in the ETJ are authorized by "interlocal agreements" between the city and the county. These agreements are voted on by the elected County Commissioners Court.

Moreover, the bill is unfair to taxpayers. It will all but nullify San Antonio's rules to protect the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. These codes ensure that caves and recharge features are protected and contamination of the aquifer is minimized.

The aquifer supplies most of our drinking water and the taxpayers of San Antonio have spent hundreds of millions of dollars buying 175,293 acres of land and conservation easements to protect it.

HB 5217 will give recharge zone developers, whose properties discharge contaminated runoff, a free ride by exempting them from aquifer protection rules. Taxpayers will bear the entire burden of protecting the aquifer.

Timothy Edward Duda
Terra Advocati
San Antonio, TX

Allowing land-owners/developers in Extra-Territorial Jurisdictions to be exempt from municipal regulations, would nullify San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and cease important protection for the Edwards Underground Aquifer. We oppose HB 5217 because thousands of acres of natural land area would be developed without any restrictions that protect sensitive habitats, important ecological systems and endangered and threatened wildlife. These areas are a vital part of our natural heritage and are part of the wonderful diversity of environments in and around San Antonio. Restrictions on development will insure that we will continue to benefit from the tree canopies and underground water availability that makes San Antonio a truly remarkable place.

mary Evans
self
San Antonio, TX

Hands off our aquifer! The taxpayers of San Antonio have spent hundreds of millions of dollars buying 175,293 acres of land and conservation easements to protect the Edwards Aquifer. This bill will give recharge zone developers, whose properties discharge contaminated runoff, a free ride by exempting them from aquifer protection rules. Taxpayers will bear the entire burden of protecting the aquifer. This bill would let developers clear-cut trees, even giant heritage oaks, anywhere in the ETJ. Since the vast majority of property inside San Antonio's (CoSA's) city limits is already developed, the ETJ is where nearly all development of raw, natural land occurs. In other words, if this bill passes, CoSA's tree ordinance will be all but worthless. In addition, developers could ignore the 15% impervious cover limit prescribed by the aquifer protection ordinance, as well as protections for creeks, caves and recharge features. There are approximately 46,000 acres of recharge zone in the ETJ. While some of that land is already developed, there are still thousands of acres of natural land available for future housing subdivisions and commercial buildings. Hands off our aquifer!

Joan Arbuckle
retired
San Antonio, TX

Please vote NO to HB 5217. I live in Bexar County and not the City of San Antonio, and there is home/apt. development going on all around our older neighborhood where all our lots are one acre in size. We see all the large ranches and large property owners putting up "For Sale" signs and developers coming in with multi-home developments. HB 5217 would allow landowners to release their property from any Texas city's ETJ. It would nullify thousands of acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and thousands of acres of its aquifer protection ordinance. Developers would be able to clear-cut any where in the ETJ. Developers could all disregard the 15% impervious cover limit prescribed by the aquifer Protection ordinance

It is true that ETJ residents cannot vote in City elections, but they also do not pay taxes to the City of San Antonio, AND they use all sorts of City funded areas such as city parks and natural areas that City residents do pay for.

I do not feel that the complaint that some people have in the ETJ that they are being "regulated without representaton" is false since they have a County Commissioner who represents them on ETJ regulations.

VOTE NO ON HB 5217!

Respectfully,

Joan M. Arbuckle

Peni Griffin, Ms.
self
San Antonio, TX

This is a bad and stupid bill, the passage of which would lead inevitably to the devastation of ecosystems, the pollution of watersheds, the erosion of topsoil, and the proliferation of overpriced, shoddy housing stock which will be left empty and rotting when the housing bubble collapses under its own weight (or government regulation getting a clue and taking matters in hand). It would be bad for the economy, the environment, and the welfare of Texas. Developers are very nearly out of control now - don't remove one of the few restraints keeping them from paving over Texas and turning it into a giant slum with a skim of billionaires floating on top.

Jamie Aven
Sierra Club
Seguin, TX

I am opposed to HB 5217. This legislation will impact every city in Texas. In our area, it would leave developers free to clear-cut trees and ignore rules to protect the Edwards Aquifer.

Maxine Williams, I am strongly opposed to HB 5217

Self, disabled
San Antonio, TX

This would be destructive to our ecosystems which is worth protecting so close to an aquifer so many drink from.

James Cannizzo, Senior Attorney Advisor
USAF, AF JAOE/FSC Lackland AFB
San Antonio, TX

In general, Defense communities need land use controls to protect installations across Texas. Texas is home to 15 military installations and headquarters several major commands across the Department of Defense (DoD). All service branches, including the U.S. Coast Guard, have a footprint in Texas. In fact, according to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, the total economic output of military installations for 2021 was approximately \$114 billion.

This bill would create significant concerns for Joint Base San Antonio installations and several of our other Texas military installations that have all or part of the installation or sub-installations in the ETJ. HB 5217 could effectively end some of the ability to control incompatible land uses in much of the ETJ areas near key military bases. Municipal authority in an ETJ is vital to protect and sustain military missions.

For example, Joint Base San Antonio has two large installations nearly entirely in the ETJ, the 28,000-acre Camp Bullis and 3,700-acre Lackland Chapman Training Annex (formerly the Medina Training Annex). These two installations have existed for decades. Camp Bullis, for example, was initially created in 1906 as the Leon Springs Military Reservation. The 85,000+ personnel at Joint Base San Antonio rely on these two facilities for all field training. Fort Sam Houston, Lackland, and Randolph AFBs are urban facilities with no field training capabilities. While these areas were initially on the outskirts of San Antonio in rural areas, they are now rapidly urbanizing, pressuring the military missions in San Antonio.

The City of San Antonio's ETJ extends five miles and protects these installations with ordinances on tree canopy, aquifer protection, lighting and outdoor signs. Due to the geography of San Antonio, the areas of concern extend farther than just 5 miles from Camp Bullis and the other military installations.

Due to the unique situation with the military installations, especially in San Antonio, any effort to limit Texas cities ETJ's should exempt cities with large military installations or sub-installations in their ETJ.

Keri Neff
self
san antonio, TX

The Edwards Aquifer has several jurisdictions for its protection of our main source of water and its purity. Additionally, The City of San Antonio has existing tree ordinances that are intended to protect our most valuable resource through tree protections and therefore aquifer protections. I oppose this bill because there are many proven ways to save trees and manage runoff in development projects. Low Impact Design is among one of the best practices being utilized by municipalities and developers to minimize runoff. This bill essentially nullifies decades of work to protect our water sources, develop responsibly and oversee development. This bill takes local ordinances off the table in favor of ill-advised, sweeping statewide measures that do not account for the particularities of local water sources. While our growth is important, we cannot allow destruction of water sources and tree canopy that sustain this state: the economy, the people, flora and fauna. This is terribly irresponsible, and I oppose this bill.

Anne Thatcher Parrish
SELF property owner
San Antonio, TX

OPPOSED

Anne Miller

Self

Austin, TX

Please note my opposition to this bill because ETJ's are necessary for aquifer and tree protection.

This legislation would benefit developers by allowing them to bypass restrictions which are in place for environmental protection. The addition of more impervious cover on the Edwards Aquifer would be detrimental to water quality. Removal of trees would also impact water quality, increase heat island effects, and mar the beauty of the hill country. Heritage trees cannot be replaced.

Lindsay Byrne

Self/Non Profit Director

San Antonio, TX

I am opposed to HB 5217. HB 5217 would be damaging to our waterways, green spaces, and natural resources. Please vote against HB 5217. Thank you for taking my comments.

Jack Olivier

Self - subsurface geologist

New Braunfels, TX

I am opposed to HB 5217. I believe that passage of this bill would negatively impact the quality of water in the Edwards Aquifer, the primary source of drinking water for over 2 million Texans.

Megan Metcalf

self, MD medical student

San Antonio, TX

As a resident of San Antonio, I am opposed to HB 5217. Protecting Edwards Aquifer is essential to the health and longevity of residents of San Antonio and the surrounding areas. I am disappointed to see this bill come forward, as it threatens the health and well being of residents by throwing our aquifer under the bus, at the expense of taxpayers.

Carolyn Croom, Ms.

Self

Austin, TX

Please vote against HB 5217, which would allow landowner and developers to unilaterally release their property from any Texas city's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). It would allow developers to clear-cut trees, even heritage oak trees, and to ignore aquifer-protection rules (such as impervious cover limits), and any protections for creeks, caves, and recharge features. This bill is unfair to taxpayers, who have paid millions of dollars in land and conservation easements, for example, to protect the Edwards Aquifer for drinking water and recreation. Texas needs to preserve these resources for future generations and not hand over these resources to developers to destroy. Please vote "NO" on HB 5217.

Raleigh Wood, Dr.

self, forensic psychologist

Helotes, TX

I live on 3 acres in the ETJ outside of Helotes. I oppose HB 5217 due to potential negative impacts its lack of regulation could have for land owners.

Thank you

Catherine Croom, Ms.
self, retired elementary art teacher
Bulverde, TX

Please vote against HB 5217, which would allow landowner and developers to unilaterally release their property from any Texas city's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). It would allow developers to clear-cut trees, even heritage oak trees, and to ignore aquifer-protection rules (such as impervious cover limits), and any protections for creeks, caves, and recharge features. This bill is unfair to taxpayers, who have paid millions of dollars in land and conservation easements, for example, to protect the Edwards Aquifer for drinking water and recreation. Texas needs to preserve these resources for future generations and not hand over these resources to developers to destroy. Please vote "NO" on HB 5217.

James Coleman, Mr
Bexar Audubon Society
San Antonio, TX

On behalf of Bexar Audubon Society's nearly 2000 members, pls, pls, pls do not allow this bill to see the light of day! This bill erroneously releases all property from any ETJ under the pretense of "regulation w/o representation."
This bill is founded on the premise that, because residents in the ETJ cannot vote in city elections, they shouldn't be subject to city regulations. There are several flaws in this premise.
First, limited-liability corporations, and homebuilding corporations from places like California, Michigan and Dallas, can't vote in city elections anyway. The vast majority of ETJ residents have no city regulations to comply with. San Antonio's tree and aquifer protection ordinances apply only to developers/builders.
Second, ETJ residents can't vote because they don't pay city taxes. Yet, they are free to take advantage of natural areas, city parks, streets and venues that city taxpayers paid for.
Third, there simply is not any "regulation without representation". ETJ residents are represented by their County Commissioners on ETJ regulations. Any city development codes applicable to the ETJ are authorized by "interlocal agreements" adopted by their County Commissioners Court (example: Comal County/CoSA agreement).
This bill has nothing to do with what is good for Texas, only what is good for a small but powerful special interest group.
Thx for all you do,
James Coleman
San Antonio, Tx,

Susan Beavin
Self
Helotes, TX

I oppose HB 5217. This shameful bill attempts to circumvent what few regulations that protect the environment. Developers do enough damage already!

Deborah Martin
Self, compassionate human
San Antonio, TX

HB 5217 will allow landowners to unilaterally release their property from any Texas city's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). It would nullify 410,000 acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and 46,000 acres of our aquifer protection ordinance. Impacts of this bill will be equally dire for those who live in or near Austin, San Marcos and, New Braunfels too.

I am opposed to HB 5217, and ask all House Committee on Land and Resource Management to oppose to HB 5217.

Beki Halpin
Self
Pflugerville, TX

The bill is unfair to taxpayers

The taxpayers of San Antonio have spent hundreds of millions of dollars buying 175,293 acres of land and conservation easements to protect the Edwards Aquifer. This bill will give recharge zone developers, whose properties discharge contaminated runoff, a free ride by exempting them from aquifer protection rules. Taxpayers will bear the entire burden of protecting the aquifer.

The Myth of "Regulation without Representation"

This bill is founded on the premise that, because residents in the ETJ cannot vote in city elections, they shouldn't be subject to city regulations. There are several flaws in this premise.

First, limited-liability corporations, and homebuilding corporations from places like California, Michigan and Dallas, can't vote in city elections anyway. The vast majority of ETJ residents have no city regulations to comply with. San Antonio's tree and aquifer protection ordinances apply only to developers/builders.

Second, ETJ residents can't vote because they don't pay city taxes. Yet, they are free to take advantage of natural areas, city parks, streets and venues that city taxpayers paid for.

Third, there simply is not any "regulation without representation". ETJ residents are represented by their County Commissioners on ETJ regulations. Any city development codes applicable to the ETJ are authorized by "interlocal agreements" adopted by their County Commissioners Court (example: Comal County/CoSA agreement).

Raul Gonzalez, Mr.
Self. Security.
Austin, TX

I am opposed to HB 5217.

David Hogan
self
Austin, TX

Please vote against HB 5217, which would allow landowner and developers to unilaterally release their property from any Texas city's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). It would allow developers to clear-cut trees, even heritage oak trees, and to ignore aquifer-protection rules (such as impervious cover limits), and any protections for creeks, caves, and recharge features. This bill is unfair to taxpayers, who have paid millions of dollars in land and conservation easements, for example, to protect the Edwards Aquifer for drinking water and recreation. Texas needs to preserve these resources for future generations and not hand over these resources to developers to destroy. Please vote "NO" on HB 5217.

Candace Volz
self / historian
AUSTIN, TX

This is a bad bill that would nullify 410,000 acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and 46,000 acres of its aquifer protection ordinance. Impacts of this bill will be equally dire for Austin, San Marcos and, New Braunfels. This legislation will impact every city in Texas. In San Antonio, developers will be free to clear-cut trees and ignore rules to protect the Edwards Aquifer. This bill would let developers clear-cut trees, even giant heritage oaks, anywhere in the ETJ. Since the vast majority of property inside San Antonio's (CoSA's) city limits is already developed, the ETJ is where nearly all development of raw, natural land occurs. In other words, if this bill passes, CoSA's tree ordinance will be all but worthless. In addition, developers could ignore the 15% impervious cover limit prescribed by the aquifer protection ordinance, as well as protections for creeks, caves and recharge features. There are approximately 46,000 acres of recharge zone in the ETJ. While some of that land is already developed, there are still thousands of acres of natural land available for future housing subdivisions and commercial buildings. The taxpayers of San Antonio have spent hundreds of millions of dollars buying 175,293 acres of land and conservation easements to protect the Edwards Aquifer. This bill will give recharge zone developers, whose properties discharge contaminated runoff, a free ride by exempting them from aquifer protection rules. Taxpayers will bear the entire burden of protecting the aquifer.

This bill is founded on the premise that, because residents in the ETJ cannot vote in city elections, they shouldn't be subject to city regulations. There are several flaws in this premise:

First, limited-liability corporations, and homebuilding corporations from places like California, Michigan and Dallas, can't vote in city elections anyway. The vast majority of ETJ residents have no city regulations to comply with. San Antonio's tree and aquifer protection ordinances apply only to developers/builders.

Second, ETJ residents can't vote because they don't pay city taxes. Yet, they are free to take advantage of natural areas, city parks, streets and venues that city taxpayers paid for.

Third, there simply is not any "regulation without representation". ETJ residents are represented by their County Commissioners on ETJ regulations. Any city development codes applicable to the ETJ are authorized by "interlocal agreements" adopted by their County Commissioners Court

For the future of Texas' natural beauty, please vote against this very bad bill!

Carmen Alamo
Self
San Antonio, TX

HB 5217 will allow landowners to unilaterally release their property from any Texas city's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). It would nullify 410,000 acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and 46,000 acres of its aquifer protection ordinance. Please preserve our natural resources which without we will not be able to sustain the already existing population growth. Be wise about the future. Vote No for HB5217.
A concerned constituent,
Carmen Álamo

Melinda Florian
GEAA
San Antonio, TX

Please don't allow passage of this bill to unilaterally release properties from any Texas city's ETJ. This would essentially nullify 46,000 acres of land that is currently under the aquifer protection ordinance, which could have huge implications on the health of the Edwards Aquifer, the primary source of drinking water for millions of residents in Texas.

John Tate
self - retired
Austin, TX

Please vote against HB 5217, which would allow landowner and developers to unilaterally release their property from any Texas city's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). It would allow developers to clear-cut trees, even heritage oak trees, and to ignore aquifer-protection rules (such as impervious cover limits), and any protections for creeks, caves, and recharge features. This bill is unfair to taxpayers, who have paid millions of dollars in land and conservation easements, for example, to protect the Edwards Aquifer for drinking water and recreation. Texas needs to preserve these resources for future generations and not hand over these resources to developers to destroy. Please vote "NO" on HB 5217.

Pat Bulla, Ms.
Self; retired
Austin, TX
Vote no!

Kathryn Vann
Self
Briarcliff, TX

Please do NOT support this Bill HB 5217. It will destroy the Hill Country. Thank you.

Malgorzata Schmidt, MD, PhD
self + three grandsons + future generations of Texans
Elgin, TX

Dear Cecil Bell and fellow Texans,

HB 5217 will allow landowners to unilaterally release their property from any Texas city's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). It would nullify 410,000 acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and 46,000 acres of its aquifer protection ordinance. Impacts of this bill will be equally dire for those who live in or near Austin, San Marcos and, New Braunfels. It will affect the whole state, country and the entire Planet due to its anti-environmental impact and the consequences for further aggravation of the climate catastrophe.

For the sake of the future generations of all animals, including H. sapiens, please eliminate this highly harmful bill. Thank you.

And with best wishes and kind regards
I remain faithfully yours
Malgorzata

Margaret Schulenberg
self/retired
Round Rock, TX

I am firmly opposed to HB 5217.

This bill fails to take into account the shared resource nature of watershed and tree cover.

The effects of developers ignoring watershed protections, as this bill would allow, would be felt far beyond the limits of their property lines, and would severely diminish the water quality on which millions depend.

Nobody has the right to dump trash on another's property, yet that is effectively what this bill would allow.

Reject HB 5217.

Xavier Alvarez Alvarez

self

Grey Forest, TX

I oppose to this bill due to it will nullify 410,000 acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and 46,000 acres of its aquifer protection ordinance.

We need to preserve as much of our green areas to keep the environment and to replenish the aquifer from were you doing the water as all of us living in this area.

Emily Hawthorn

Self - retired

San Antonio, TX

I oppose HB 5217. The citizens of central TX, specifically Austin and San Antonio and surrounding towns, depend on the aquifers for safe drinking water. We have spent millions of dollars protecting our trees and the land over out aquifers. Developers don't care about those things because they don't live here. Please do not pass HB 5217. Thank you for your support.

Ellen Clegg

Self

San Antonio, TX

As I understand it, this bill would enable removal of trees in the ETJ area. The environmental destruction would be devastating to the city because it would allow property owners to cut down trees. Trees help combat warming in our area and contribute to the protection of the aquifer. Removing trees for property development only benefits the developers. Sustaining a livable environment in the San Antonio area is far more necessary than allowing a few people to exploit the area for personal greed.

Daniel Harrison

self

Hutto, TX

I ask that all members of the Land & Resource Management Committee vote against HB 5217. This bill will allow landowners to release their property from any city's ETJ. This would allow individual property owners to nullify the ability of cities in Texas to regulate land use, including for environmental, public safety and any other purposes. It would undermine the constitutionally mandated home rule powers of cities and is therefore harmful to all Texans. Please do not approve this legislation.

Sarah Mercer

Canyon Lake

Canyon Lake, TX

I am writing as a rural landowner in Texas. Please do not allow HB 5217. This affects a large number of Texans who have little to no protection when it comes to keeping our environment healthy and safe.

TCEQ has been rubber stamping permits for all kinds of polluters, and unfortunately after sunset, pollution of our air and waterways will continue to happen mostly unregulated.

ETJs offer folks like myself who are only protected by a mostly non-existent county government to have some sort of protection for our health and safety thanks to nearby cities that offer their citizens that protection.

This law will not protect Texas or Texans. Vote no.

Jeff Jewell
Self
New Braunfels, TX

Please vote against 5217 as proposed. This bill will have the unintended consequence of endangering and diminishing the quality of life for county residents that request release from the ETJ. Cities can and do enforce certain life and safety provisions in their ETJ - stormwater management and thoroughfare planning, for example- that protect life and property and provide for comprehensive transportation solutions. If areas petition for release, cities lose the ability to enforce these critical rules that often save lives and protect property values. The effects of the bill will lead to increased stormwater runoff that will impact citizens downstream, mismatched and inefficient road and transportation infrastructure that will further frustrate and cost citizens more to remedy. Please vote against this bill.

Anne Wallace
self: artist and landowner
San Antonio, TX

HB 5217 endangers the future of the greater San Antonio area by endangering our supply of clean drinking water. This is a growing concern all over Texas. The greater San Antonio area relies on the Edwards Aquifer for sustenance. It is imperative that we protect the Aquifer's recharge zone from pollutants and toxic runoff. Protecting creeks, natural areas and large stand of trees helps to accomplish this by absorbing and filtering water and limiting the pollution and runoff caused by too much impervious cover and unbridled development. This Bill, if passed, will allow LLCs and developers - many or most of whom come from afar and have no tie or concern for local residents and their issues - to denude the natural areas that help guarantee safe drinking water for the growing City. These LLCs and Developers - again, most are from other states - who operate outside the City's territorial jurisdiction do not pay City taxes and therefore don't have the right to vote here. This Bill will not give them those rights. Extraterritorial residents are represented by their County Commissioners who make interlocal agreements with the City of San Antonio. This is a dangerous Bill. Please vote against it.

Jerry Dobbs, Mr.
Self
Grey Forest,, TX

I respectfully oppose HB 5217. It would be detrimental to our aquifer and our native trees. Please do not pass this bill. Thank you, Jerry Dobbs

Miguel Cantu
City of Grey Forest
San Antonio, TX

As a representative of the the San Antonio Community, I oppose this House bill 5217. Please stop attacking cities.

Andrew Cortes
Self- Engineer
Austin, TX

I support this bill.

Interlocal Agreements between a City and County should clearly define applicable regulations and responsibilities of each entity but they are disorganized, conflicting, and often unenforced. The delegation of review authority and application of municipal regulations in the ETJ has become a tool to delay subdivision and leverage regulation and services (or consent to Municipal Utility Districts) to extract annexation, land use controls, and other concessions where it is not legally allowed to do so. This bill will provide property owner's rights to clear, fair, and efficient agreements with cities for annexation and services or the option for singular representation and a single set of consolidated and consistent regulations related to their property.

JERALDINE PORTER

self

Fischer, TX

I oppose the passage of HB 5217 on the grounds that we need to do a better job of preserving our existing trees, not eliminate them, for the health of our very precious water resources. Preserving the tree population is an enormous factor in protecting our aquifers and we all know this region is in danger with our increasing times of drought and increasing growth. The water wells in my part of Comal County have already experienced periods of NO water. These wells have been in place since the 1950's and have historically never seen this condition. Without proper tree management and proper conservation methods, we will only see this situation deteriorate further.

Helen Gilker

self

Austin, TX

I oppose this bill. I dont see why we would want to add threats to our water security

Jackie Cole

self

Galveston, TX

I oppose this bill. There will be extraordinary unintended consequences to the loss of habitat and well as the expense to taxpayers with the degradation of areas that protect aquifers. Not to mention the loss of the trees. This bill would allow unmindful wholesale cutting down of old trees. Please do not advance this bill/.

Christopher Wren

Treaty Oak Developers

Spring, TX

As a property owner, an imaginary ETJ line should not prohibit me from developing my property as I want to. When the city does not provide any services for my community and can not provide any required utilities in my arera, why should they be able to govern and control my property? If i have to create utilities (water and sewer) to serve my property, I should be able to determine what I want to develop. Cities continue to use the ETJ as an effort to control tax payers that are not even in the city limits.

Annalisa Peace
Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance
San Antonio, TX

On behalf of the fifty-six member organizations of the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, I wish to register strong opposition to HB 5217. If passed, this bill would have deleterious impacts on Texas municipality's efforts to manage growth in a civilized manner within their ETJ's. In the high growth areas in the Texas Hill Country, enforcing municipal ordinances within the ETJ is particularly important because most growth is occurring in unincorporated areas where Texas counties are restricted from regulating most aspects of development. Municipal codes enforced within the ETJ are the only way to ensure that development occurs in a manner that is consistent with the needs of the community.

Municipalities such as San Antonio, which rely on groundwater as their major source of public supply, have passed ordinances to insure protection of this precious resource. So important is protection of this resource that the citizens of San Antonio have contributed \$325 million to purchase land and easements on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. It is not possible, however, to secure all the land needed to ensure permanent protection of this extremely environmentally sensitive area. The city must rely on ordinances passed to insure that new development within the Recharge Zone does not pollute the water supply. Based on the consensus of scientists, San Antonio has limited impervious cover on the Recharge Zone to 15% in its ETJ. If HB 5217 becomes law, these protections would become irrelevant.

In our experience dealing with builders and developers we have found that, for the most part, local businesses are cognizant and respectful of the need for water protection and other municipal ordinances that aim to protect the quality of life and the natural resources of the communities where they are building. The big national outfits, however, are often more interested using a one size fits all approach designed to reap maximum profits. Very often, land owners are advised to take certain measures in advance of a sale that will moot some of the protections afforded by municipal regulations. It appears to us that HB 5217 is expressly designed for this purpose.

We urge you not to approve HB 5217. Thank you for your consideration.

LaWann Tull
Self
Georgetown, TX

I am opposed. Stricter legislation on developers like using purple pipe, water conservation through reuse instead of dumping in our rivers is needed. HB5217 frees up developers in ETJs to further damage a fragile system that is strained already.

Will Genrich
Forestar
Austin, TX
I support

Daniel Signorelli
Signorelli Company/Self
The Woodlands, TX

I am Danny Signorelli, CEO/Founder of The Signorelli Company, one of the largest private developers in the State. For 28 years, we have developed 10,000+ ac. of communities, & millions of SqFt of retail, office, MF, & medical across Houston & SA. We create better places for families to live, work & play. TSC has experienced the good, the bad & the ugly when it comes to government, & we know from experience that you can't paint all cities with the same paintbrush.

As such, we support HB5217 to protect the key pillars of the Texas Miracle, which is the low cost of living & low cost of housing, that drive jobs, attracts corporations, & provides a better way of life compared to so many competing States.

Unfortunately, Texas has seen a wide variety of mismanagement on the city level, often serving special agendas, & such, going against middle America & the American dream. I have firsthand experience of more than 3 occasions in 3 different cities, where our land was in the ETJ, & the city attempted to impose regs that were of no benefit to the consumer, but only to the detriment of the development. These projects were robbed of financial feasibility & remained as raw land instead of creating a quality community. If developed, prices were so high, that the backbone of America, our workforce, from teachers to police, could no longer afford a home.

Typical demands by cities might be a lot size requirement, where the city's oppressive nature has restricted lots below a certain size, as the city wants to cater only to the wealthy. In other instances, cities have attempted to enforce ambitious commercial wants, placing little emphasis on the reality of the market. OR where cities have been so poorly managed, they need to lean on the growth of suburbs to support & pay for their past financial sins, whether that be to fund bringing their old water & sewer plants up to date or just trying to find revenue.

In a world fighting to protect a free market economy, I ask the Committee to support 5217 & allow property rights & a free-market economy to be led by an industry full of talented, smart entrepreneurs. I ask the Committee to remove the arrow from the quiver of the cities, so they can no longer use ETJ as a tool to force their will. If there is good business to be found between a city & a landowner, it will be found by sensible leaders, NOT because an ETJ law dictates power to a city.

It's proven that it is often more cost effective for us to develop utilities on our own in the private sector via smart tools the legislature provides, & that the suburbs are the place for the most cost-effective housing solution across every major city in Texas. It not surprising that much of this value is due to private industry, & the limitation of big, government control, & the limitations that come with a city council that lacks the time, the knowledge, & the experience to determine what can & can't be developed on a piece of land in the ETJ of a city.

Carmen Rumbaut
San Marcos River Foundation
San Marcos, TX

I am opposed to this bill.
I care about the 410,000 acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and 46,000 acres of its aquifer protection ordinance.
Please vote against this.

Claudia Malaya
personal citizen
austin, TX

i am opposed to this bill. Please do not let this bill pass. My area in austin - peoples wells are going dry daily. this ordinance will not help solve this situation
thank you for your time

Ruth Russell

Devils River Conservancy, Llano River Watershed Alliance, Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance
San Antonio, TX

I oppose this bill. Protected lands that are vital to aquifer recharge and habitat protection would be in jeopardy. As fragmentation gobbles up land it is even more important to protect special habitats and water absorption which benefits the public with clean air, pure water, and preservation of wildlife to name a few.

David King

self

Austin, TX

Honorable Members of the House Land & Resource Management Committee, Please do not approve HB 5217 that would allow any property owner to unilaterally release their property from any municipalities extra-territorial jurisdiction. This bill would wreak havoc on municipalities throughout the state by disrupting regional land use planning and long range regional infrastructure projects. It would nullify 410,000 acres of San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance and 46,000 acres of its aquifer protection ordinance. Thank you for considering my comments and for your service.