

Dear GEAA members and friends,

As usual about this time in the session, all hell is breaking loose in the State Legislature. But, you have a chance to weigh in on many of these issues.

To highlight just a few bills of concern this week:

- [HB 1865](#) and several other bills would severely compromise citizens' rights to oppose permits for projects that would negatively affect them and the use and enjoyment of their property, [Click here](#) to read more.

[HB 1865](#) will be heard in the Environmental Regulation at 8:00 AM, Tuesday, March 31, 2015 at E1.026

Please contact HB 1865's sponsor, [Representative Geanie Morrison](#), who is also the Chair of the [House Environmental Regulation Committee](#).

- [HB 40](#), which would nullify Denton's successful initiative to ban fracking in their city limits, is up to be voted out of committee during today's [House Energy Resource committee](#) hearing.

No matter what your views are on fracking, this bill would undermine local government's powers of initiative and referendum and is a broad grab of power by the state to undermine municipal determination. We need as many concerned Texans as possible to make an effort to speak out to the [committee members](#) to argue that they vote against this bill. In particular it would be important that you make an effort to reach out to a swing vote on the committee: Terry Canales at 512-463-0426 or at [terry.canales@house.state.tx.us](mailto:terry.canales@house.state.tx.us). If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to call Public Citizen at 512-477-1155.

[Several bills](#) have been filed that would threaten municipalities from enacting and enforcing ordinances on tree preservation, water quality, local sovereignty, and even pay day lending and non-smoking ordinances. The worst of these are [SB 343](#), which would eliminate virtually all local authority to make or pass ordinances at the city level, and [SB 360](#), which would threaten many local governments with endless lawsuits over their ordinances. To learn more about these and other bills that would put all regulatory powers in the hands of the State, visit [Local Control Texas](#).

Last session we put a stop to legislation (HB 824/SB 584) that would have loosened requirements for reporting sewage spills. This session we have

been working with staff of Senator Elfite and industry lobbyists to amend a similar bill, [SB 912](#). But, we still aren't there yet. Please contact [Senator Elfite](#) and let him know that you support [amendments proposed by GEAA and the Lone Star Sierra Club](#).

We will be sending out more legislative alerts during the coming days and weeks. Thank you so much for responding; your participation in the past has made all the difference in the world!

[Find out who your legislators are](#). Visit [www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us](http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us) or call the Capitol Switchboard at 512-463-4630.

Annalisa Peace, Executive Director

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