



The Senate of The State of Texas

GONZALO BARRIENTOS
STATE SENATOR DISTRICT 14

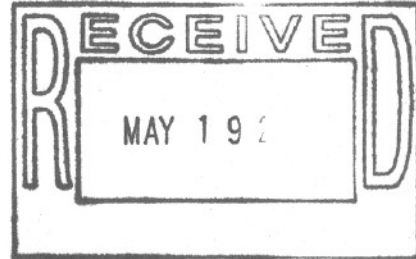
P.O. BOX 12068

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711
TRAVIS (PART) COUNTY

(512) 463-0114 FAX: (512) 463-5949
DIAL 711 FOR RELAY CALLS

May 14th, 2004

Mr. Ray Wilkerson
Chair
Lower Colorado River Authority
8015 Shoal Creek Blvd., Suite 100
Austin, Texas 78757



Dear Mr. Wilkerson:

I write to you today concerning the role of the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) in the development of the unincorporated area of Western Travis County, which is in my state senatorial district. The tension between development and our unique natural environment is a constant in Central Texas, but the issue has come to a head recently with news of negotiations between LCRA and the developer of the "Sweetwater" Lazy 9 M.U.D. (the creation of which was enabled by a bill I sponsored in the legislature), as well as the pending request before your board asking LCRA to extend a surface water line to the Hamilton Pool Road area in Southwestern Travis County.

There are a number of issues in play here, including:

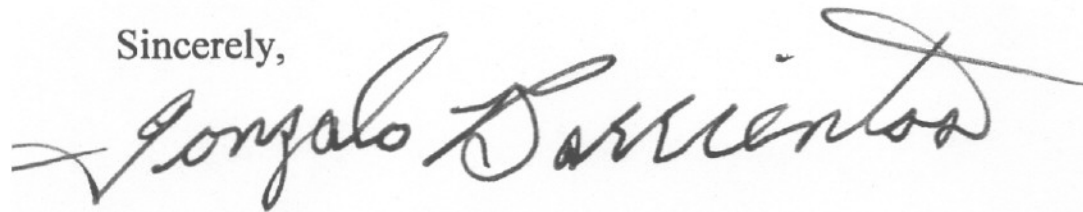
- the desire to avoid traditional suburban sprawl, as evidenced in the Envision Central Texas process;
- water quality and quantity in at least two aquifers (Hays-Trinity and the Barton Springs portion of the Edwards) and the jewel of Austin, Barton Springs;
- fluctuations in the level of Lake Travis;
- the impact of traffic from new development on roads neither currently able nor with sufficient planned expansion to handle it;
- potential benefits from "regionalization" with respect to the provision of water and wastewater service; and
- the choice of proceeding with development under state and federal guidelines as negotiated with the LCRA or waiting for the adoption of enforceable ordinances produced by the ongoing planning process between the City of Austin and Hays County.

Of course, the list above is not exhaustive and not all of them are within the LCRA's control. However, to fail to recognize that the provision of water by the LCRA is the primary engine of residential development in this area is to ignore reality.

I realize that each surface water request made of the LCRA is different, and this letter should not be construed as endorsement of or opposition to any specific proposal or project. What I do request of you today, is that you **not** act on any surface water requests for Travis County at your May 19, 2004 meeting. Instead, I hope the board will conduct a series of both public meetings for additional public input and private meetings with developers, landowners, appropriate city, state, and federal officials, representatives from Envision Central Texas and the City of Austin-Hays County planning effort, the Save our Springs Alliance and anyone else you think would add to the discussion. I know a number of meetings have already been held with respect to individual projects, but I think the confluence of events has made the time ripe for a comprehensive examination. I harbor no illusions about finding a magic bullet with which to resolve growth issues in this area, but I think we are obligated to work **quickly** towards a regional approach.

If there is any way that I can be of assistance to the LCRA in this matter, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gonzalo Barrientos". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "G".

Gonzalo Barrientos
State Senator, District 14

GB/gk

cc: Mr. G. Hughes Abell, Vice-Chair; Ms. Connie Granberg, Secretary; and Ms. Kay Carlton; Ms. Ida A. Carter; Ms. Lucy Cavazos; Mr. John C. Dickerson III; Mr. Walter E. Garret; Mr. F. Scott Lagrone; Mr. Robert W. Lambert; Mr. Robert K. Long; Mr. John H. Matthews; Mr. Charles R. Moser; Mr. Clay N. Nettleship; and Ms. Rosemary Rust, Commissioners, Lower Colorado River Authority; Mr. Joe Beal, P.E., General Manager, Lower Colorado River Authority; Honorable Daryl Slusher, Austin City Council, Place 1; Honorable Jim Powers, Hays County Judge; Mr. Bill Bunch, Executive Director, SOS Alliance; Mr. William T. Gunn; and Ms. Rebecca Hudson.