

San Antonio City Council Testimony, November 19, 2015
Linda Curtis, League of Independent Voters of Texas

I'm Linda Curtis, a volunteer and Executive Director of the League of Independent Voters. Thought the League is a statewide organization, I live in Bastrop, one of the four "forced donor" counties for Vista Ridge which includes Burleson, Lee and Milam counties.

The Chamber of Commerce (the real estate lobby) was all over the news yesterday beating their chests that WE need this water – no, THEY need this water – we, the citizens need fair rates, protection of our water resources and an open and fair process for deciding these mega-projects.

The Chamber (the real estate lobby) went so far as to say yesterday that the military might not want to continue investing in San Antonio if you don't pass these unfair rates for Vista Ridge. Why was the Chamber and not the military saying this?

Now why is the Chamber (the real estate lobby) trying to scare you into voting for these rate hikes -- in the face of citizens beginning to insist on some straight answers about this boondoggle?

I think the Chamber (the real estate lobby) is scared because this deal is vulnerable as hell. The water is not secure, the landowners in Burleson County are up in arms and the ratepayers of San Antonio, who have been misled by SAWS and some of you on the Council, are getting the news that they're going to be paying for the follies of real estate developers who are looking to offload the costs of water onto current residents for all the newcomers THEY – the real estate lobby – are trying to get to move here.

Now, Councilmembers, it is your time to be a leader for your constituents. I know that won't include Joe Krier, he and his neighbors on Cadillac Drive have their own Cadillac Water Company --- that's right he's not even a SAWS ratepayer --- so why should he care? Councilman Krier was quoted yesterday saying, "The agreement says that SAWS won't pay for water it doesn't use"....perhaps he can tell us where to find that in the agreement.

Councilmembers, this is -- at this moment -- up to you to put the rates for Vista Ridge on hold. If you make the wrong decision, it will be up to the people of San Antonio along with their friends along the pipeline, to take appropriate action to stop it and to remember your vote today.

My advice to you is to take control of your utility and put the real estate lobby in it's proper place.