

**Delay Vista Ridge
Avert a Groundwater and Ratepayer Crisis!**

Whereas, urban and rural Texans alike now face an unfolding economic crisis due to the coronavirus pandemic, which is expected to have disproportionate effects on poverty level and lower middle class residents;

Whereas, 60 percent of the state's freshwater supply is groundwater, and its value to the state economy and the security of the nation's food supply cannot be overstated, especially in times of economic crisis;

Whereas, we need sufficient, affordable and cost-effective water supplies that also are sustainable, for Texas to remain economically competitive;

Whereas, groundwater in the Simsboro formation of the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer in Bastrop, Lee, Burleson, and Milam counties has been targeted for more than two decades by irresponsible private and public water marketers, including the San Antonio Water System (SAWS);

Whereas, mega-permits have been obtained or are being sought from local groundwater conservation districts to pump and export hundreds of thousands of acre feet of Simsboro groundwater annually for real estate development along the I-35 corridor;

Whereas, SAWS has admitted that the Vista Ridge contract is for 30% more water than San Antonio can use and they have no plan to market the excess 15,000 annual acre-feet;

Whereas, California has experienced serious consequences to its aquifers from decades of subsidizing mass conveyance of groundwater for real estate development in areas without adequate local supply;

Whereas, the most recent failure of our state's water policy is the \$3.4 billion SAWS/Vista Ridge project to pump huge quantities of Burleson County groundwater 142 miles to San Antonio, starting in April 2020;

Whereas, Vista Ridge will endanger the Edwards Aquifer and the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer, the two major aquifers serving millions of central Texans, and the rivers, streams, springs and ecosystems that depend on groundwater;

Whereas, the huge cost of Vista Ridge will impact rural economies who lose access to their water, as well as cause rates to skyrocket for SAWS' ratepayers, who are among the poorest in the nation;

Whereas, the devastating environmental and economic costs of Vista Ridge pumping on both ends of the pipeline, undoubtedly will be exacerbated by the coronavirus crisis;

Whereas, the unaccountability of SAWS is so problematic, a volunteer citizens municipal petition drive for the "SAWS Accountability Act" was launched on February 17, but is now on hold due to the coronavirus;

THEREFORE, our party resolves to demand local and state official intervention to put the commencement of Vista Ridge pumping on hold until a thorough and independent performance audit of the Vista Ridge project is completed.

League of Independent Voters of Texas