



CHARLES PERRY
TEXAS STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 28

July 9, 2020

Friends of Lake McQueeney
P.O. Box 781
McQueeney, TX 78123

Friends of Lake McQueeney,

As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Water & Rural Affairs, my focus is safe and reliable infrastructure critical to the success of our state for both water supply and economic viability. At the end of last session, the collapse of the Lake Dunlap dam within the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) system revealed of the lack of understanding as to who's responsibility it is to maintain private waterways in Texas. This revelation started a broader conversation regarding similar structures around the state. This conversation will continue through next session.

Following meetings with many of the private property owners, GBRA, and state officials, the best outcome has always been for all of the parties to work together to fix the structures. Through these conversations, it became clear that the creation of locally controlled special purpose districts would best serve the residents of the areas.

It is my understanding the Friends of Lake McQueeney (FOLM) have been working to create a water control improvement district which would levy a tax to cover the cost of a new dam for Lake McQueeney assuring public safety. Additionally, continuing a partnership with GBRA to obtain financing through the Texas Water Development Board will maintain the new structures providing ongoing economic stability of the region.

As tough a realization as the dam break was, it provided an opportunity to dive deep into a problem that has deadly consequences if not corrected. For those that do not understand the need to create a tax levy for the maintenance and upkeep of these structures, let me be clear, these are not the states' responsibility. Therefore, no appropriation from the state's budget should be relied on.

I continue to applaud the efforts of the property owners to partner together and work with the other affected lakes to systematically fix failing infrastructure. I look forward to continuing to watch your successes. Please keep me informed of your progress. If successful, it will become a model the state can point to, keeping some of the most cherished treasures in Texas a safe and viable refuge for the citizens to use.

Sincerely,

Charles Perry
Chair, Senate Committee on Water and Rural Affairs



The State of Texas House of Representatives

JOHN KUEMPEL DISTRICT 44 • GUADALUPE & WILSON COUNTIES

June 26, 2020

Friends of Lake McQueeney
P.O. Box 781
McQueeney, Texas 78123

Friends of Lake McQueeney,

You won't find any elected official that cares more than me about Lake McQueeney. The lake, and the community around it, has been the location of some of my fondest memories with friends and family. I am 100% committed to preserving Lake McQueeney!

As you know, I have been working with Friends of Lake McQueeney (FOLM) on the best achievable solution for funding the reconstruction of the dam at Lake McQueeney. I appreciate the effort that FOLM has put into this project, as we have had numerous meetings, calls and strategy sessions. I believe the creation of the WCID along with a low interest loan from the water development board is the best solution at this time. This public private partnership can secure the lake for all future generations.

As you know, I tried to secure funding in the state budget during the last legislative session. We were able to get funding on the House side but it ultimately did not pass in the final budget. This coming session will be even more difficult to secure general revenue funding for this project as the State will be facing a large budget shortfall.

The Covid-19 shut down has impacted countless businesses, caused a drop in oil prices, and reduced economic activity. Accordingly, Texas' tax revenue has dropped considerably. Funding for existing programs will be in jeopardy and funding for new programs will be extremely limited if not non-existent. Agencies have already been asked to cut their existing budgets. These factors create significant uncertainty for any proposed legislation, including obtaining state funding for rebuilding the dam.

That uncertainty makes finalizing the WCID and the partnership with the GBRA all the more important. I encourage you to continue your hard work in getting this deal across the goal line. Please continue to call on me if I can be of any further assistance, please let me know. I am confident that this work will insure that future generations will share in the enjoyment of Lake McQueeney.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Kuempel".



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

LYLE LARSON, CHAIR

June 24, 2020

Friends of Lake McQueeney
P.O. Box 781
McQueeney, TX 78123

Dear Friends of Lake McQueeney:

Thank you for contacting me about the need to rebuild the dam on Lake McQueeney.

It is my understanding that the Friends of Lake McQueeney organization has been working to create a water control improvement district that, if approved by the voters, would have the ability to levy a property tax to fund rebuilding the dam. Additionally, it's my understanding that your organization is working with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority to reach an agreement where the GBRA would partner with the district to secure a low interest loan from the Water Development Board to finance the effort.

It has come to my attention that there are some arguing against the public-private partnership with the GBRA. They are suggesting that homeowners at McQueeney would be better served pursuing legislation that would require the state to pay to rebuild the dam. Such arguments lack an understanding of the realities of the state budget and the legislative process. This strategy would ultimately result in the deferral of restoring the dam.

It has been my privilege to chair the House Natural Resources Committee. In that role, I have worked with all of the river authorities in the state, which each maintain their respective infrastructure without state appropriations. There is not a single dam under river authority control we're aware of that was paid for with a state appropriation. A proposal to spend state dollars to rebuild the dam on Lake McQueeney would likely be met with significant opposition.

Rather, the state has provided a number of financing tools through the Texas Water Development Board, such as those being discussed with GBRA, to develop and maintain water infrastructure. In this case, since revenues from hydroelectric power sales are not sufficient, another revenue stream to pay back a low interest loan from the TWDB must be identified.

Encourage you to move forward with your efforts to reach an agreement with the GBRA. This public-private partnership appears to be the most viable path forward for ensuring that Lake McQueeney is enjoyed for years to come.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lyle Larson".

Lyle Larson

WILL METCALF, VICE-CHAIR

ALEX DOMINGUEZ • JESSICA FARRAR • CODY HARRIS • TRACY O. KING • MIKE LANG • PONCHO NEVÁREZ • TOM OLIVERSON • FOUR PRICE • ANA-MARIA RAMOS

P.O. Box 2910 • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768-2910 • (512) 463-0802



Donna Campbell, M.D.
Texas State Senator
District 25

July 7, 2020

Friends of Lake McQueeney
P.O. Box 781
McQueeney, TX 78123

Dear Friends of Lake McQueeney (FOLM),

Thank you for your hard work and dedication towards making your one common goal come into fruition; repairing the dam on Lake McQueeney. I always say that the blessing of perseverance is success and with that truth in mind, I look forward to continuing to work alongside Friends of Lake McQueeney to ensure that our community can enjoy the beautiful Lake McQueeney for years to come.

In the 86th Legislature, I worked hard to secure funding from our state budget for the repair of the dam at Lake McQueeney. However, due to an increase in funds for our education system, property tax relief, and Hurricane Harvey relief, the state budget did not have wherewithal to fund the dam repairs.

Now that we are experiencing an economic downturn due to COVID-19, I am certain that our state's budget will not have the resources available to fund the repairs to the dam next session. Lake McQueeney and the surrounding community cannot afford to wait a few more sessions to *potentially* fund the dam. After several meetings, expert advice, and a couple of years of deliberation, FOLM and elected officials have come up with the most affordable and immediate solution to restore Lake McQueeney. The creation of the Water Conservation Improvement District (WCID), if agreed upon by the voters, is the best option to raise the funds to repair the dam.

In addition to the economic impact of COVID-19, Representative Larson, House Chairman of Natural Resources, validates why a public-private partnership with GBRA must happen for the immediate restoration of the lake:

"The state has provided a number of financing tools through the Texas Water Development Board, such as those being discussed with GBRA, to develop and maintain water infrastructure. In this case, since revenues from hydroelectric power sales are not sufficient, another revenue stream to pay back a low interest loan from the TWDB must be identified."

I applaud the Friends of Lake McQueeney in the efforts to support funding the repair of the beloved lake during these uncertain times. A public-private partnership with WCID and GBRA is in the community's best interest and is the most sensible solution to the problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donna Campbell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "C".

Senator Donna Campbell, M.D.

Senate District 25

Chair, Committee on Veterans Affairs and Border Security