

The Honorable Dan Patrick
Lt. Governor, State of Texas
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711

LAKES CONROE AND HOUSTON

Dear Lt. Governor Patrick:

Hurricane Harvey deposited record amounts of rainfall throughout Montgomery County, Harris County and surrounding areas. Our sympathies go out to those who endured personal tragedies and financial hardships as a result of the storm. Immediate efforts are necessary to identify solutions to flood control. As residents and businesses in the Lake Conroe area, we support a comprehensive, independent flood control study covering the area from northern Montgomery County to Galveston Bay, to include all stakeholders and with consideration of the following items:

- We support representation on the San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) Board by one individual from the Lake Houston area to provide that community with an understanding of the specific operations of SJRA and have a voice in SJRA Board decision-making.
- We support studying the effectiveness of remediation of the San Jacinto River which weighs benefits to the Lake Houston area and the costs associated with any proposed remediation.
- We request a review of the construction and operation of the Lake Houston dam. Provision of water release gates similar to those on Lake Conroe and other dams would allow Lake Houston to better control lake levels independently and release amounts of water that could mitigate flood damage in the surrounding areas.
- We do not support remediation of the main body of Lake Houston unless it is coupled with a reduction of the lake water level, either temporary (precautionary) or permanent. Increasing the capacity of Lake Houston by dredging does not impact flood control if the lake level is unchanged after remediation.
- We do not support a PERMANENT three foot reduction of the pooling level of Lake Conroe from 201 feet to 198 feet above sea level. Structures have been built and local economies developed based on the State-mandated level on Lake Conroe of 201 feet. Water released from Lake Conroe by SJRA during Hurricane Harvey is estimated at only 10-15% of the inflows into Lake Houston. With over 15 feet of water released from Lake Conroe during the storm, it has not been agreed upon that a lake level reduction of 3 feet would have substantially reduced downstream devastation.
- We do not support a TEMPORARY reduction of Lake Conroe by 3 feet if “temporary” means until remediation efforts on the San Jacinto River and Lake Houston are complete. Remediation requires planning, permitting, approval, funding, land acquisition and physical completion which probably exceeds 5 years in duration.
- We do not currently support the TEMPORARY reduction of Lake Conroe by 3 feet if “temporary” means a pre-release of water by SJRA in anticipation of a projected storm event. Consideration could be given to supporting a “pre-release strategy” if a study is completed by an independent third party that evaluates the effectiveness and risks of “pre-release” to those on Lake Conroe and downstream. Specific protocols would need to be developed and adhered to which direct SJRA in a decision to “pre-release”.

We appreciate your consideration of our positions.

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

County: _____