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LON BURNAM
DISTRICT 90 • FORT WORTH

March 8, 2005

Hon. Lois Finkelman, Chair
Committee on Health, Environment, and Human Services
Members of Dallas City Council
1500 Marilla Street, Room 5EN
Dallas, Texas 75201-6390

Dear Chairwoman Finkelman and Members of the Council:

It has come to my attention that on March 9 you will be voting on Dallas' Long Range Water Supply Plan to address future water supply issues.

Like my colleagues Senate Natural Resources Committee Chair Ken Arrabristo, House Natural Resources Committee Chair Robert Puerto, Senator Kevin Eltife, and Representatives Mark Homer and Stephen Frost, I am concerned that you are considering a plan and related studies that include new reservoirs when conservation measures have not been fully explored and implemented. Reservoirs such as Marvin Nichols and Fastrill would inundate approximately 100,000 acres in East Texas and cause the sale of approximately 300,000 acres of land from what will undoubtedly be many unwilling Texans. The environmental impacts, displacement of landowners, and costs of construction have already been incurred on reservoirs constructed in the past. Availing ourselves of the water resources from existing reservoirs and implementing increased conservation and water recycling avoids the impacts that accrue when pursuing new projects.

I am told that the Region C Water Planning Group is currently studying over 1.5 million acre-feet per year of water from existing sources, including Lake Texoma "already authorized", Lake Texoma "not yet authorized," Lake Wright Patman, and a wide variety of other sources, which could be used to meet the gap between current supply and the region's water demands projected for 2060. Due to the tremendous loss of high-value bottomland hardwood ecosystems and the harm to individuals, agriculture, and the local economy when any new reservoir is built, new reservoirs should be considered only if existing resources are not available.

I urge that you meet your needs by using existing developed water resources and aggressive conservation practices rather than considering new reservoirs.

Best Regards,


Lon Burnam

COMMITTEES: AGRICULTURE & LIVESTOCK • LAW ENFORCEMENT

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