



Austin Landline Report December 2017

Almost 900,000 Texans have filed for disaster relief from Hurricane Harvey. The current federal budget proposal does not include the promised \$44 billion in funding for damage in Florida and Texas, which is still way below estimates of needs.

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar reduced his estimate of what the Texas Legislature will need to appropriate to address Hurricane Harvey damage. Hegar originally forecast lawmakers would need to pass a supplemental appropriation of \$2 billion when the Legislature convenes in 2019; he now estimates a need for \$1.5 billion. He estimates other items, including Medicaid, public education and retired teacher health, will require supplemental funding of \$2.6 billion.

December 11th is the deadline to file for the March primaries. Rep. Jason Isaac and former Congressman Quico Canseco, among several others, including Democrats, have announced as candidates to fill retiring Cong. Lamar Smith's seat. At least one Republican and one Democrat have announced runs against Cong. Blake Farenthold, with additional candidates a distinct possibility.

Fundraising events are in full swing before the end of the year and we are trying to represent STPRA as well as possible in attending them. All STPRA members are encouraged to consider donating to our state and federal PACs to enhance our effectiveness.

Our board and staff are working in a leadership role with our allies to strengthen our collective position in promoting eminent domain reform in the next legislative session.