



Austin Landline Report July 2017

True to rumors, Abbott absolutely slaughtered many of San Antonio Representative Lyle Larsons' bills in retaliation for Larson's tirade about Abbott's "pay to play" agency appointments. Abbott vetoed Larson's bills that enabled use of Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)/federal water quality funds for conservation of open space and development of desalination and Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) projects, facilitating brackish groundwater production, facilitating groundwater transport permits and aligning them with production permits, a study of water needs of the state, and \$2 million for a study of brackish aquifers.

Attended a meeting of the Ag Council to review the session and discuss the special session. Not really much of note, except complaining about Abbott vetoes that will affect property owners and the usual hand-wringing over the diminishing influence of rural Texas. Of particular concern was elimination of funding for brush clearing subsidies for private landowners. There was talk about sponsoring the bi-annual Ag orientation for legislative members and staffers next spring at the Luling Foundation. Last year's was at the Stiles Farm.

The special session will begin on the 18th and is expected to be another stand-off between the speaker and the Lt. Governor. There are no issues on the call that are officially of direct interest to us, but we will be watching the annexation and tree ordinance issues if they are considered on the floor.