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March 8, 2011

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State Senators Hegar and Watson File Legislation to Protect Local Interests

AUSTIN---Today, Sens. Glenn Hegar (R-Katy) and Kirk Watson (D-Austin) filed Senate Bill (S.B.) 1257, a bill that seeks to ensure county support before existing water districts in one county are able to annex land in another county.

S.B. 1257 was filed in an attempt to protect landowners from developments encroaching into a community without first seeking local input and support. This legislation stems from an ongoing issue in Bastrop and Travis Counties, where an entity is exploring the idea of annexing land in Bastrop County for development of the Central Texas Airport project, despite the fact that the entirety of the existing District is located in Travis County and an estimated 12 miles from the proposed annexed property.

"There is absolutely no reason why a district should have the authority to develop land in another county before first working with surrounding landowners and the county to make certain that all of their concerns are addressed," Senator Hegar said.

Hegar and Watson also wrote a letter to the Board of Directors of this particular district to encourage that they work in conjunction with the citizens of both communities to address any concerns they may have before moving forward with the proposal. However, without legislation, they are not required to do so.

"This bill will make sure Texans will have their voices heard and their concerns addressed in a public venue before such a significant annexation occurs," said Senator Watson.

The lawmakers are closely monitoring the particular situation in Bastrop and Travis counties as they move forward with S.B. 1257.

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Senator Hegar served two terms in the Texas House of Representatives and now represents Senate District 18 in the Texas Senate. Senate District 18 contains over one-third of the Texas coastline. He is a sixth generation Texan, and earns a living farming on land that has been in his family since the mid 1800's. He currently resides in Katy, Texas with his wife Dara, and their three children, Claire, Julia, and Jonah.