



February 14, 2023

Honorable Members of the Houston Delegation
Texas State Capitol
1100 Congress Ave.
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Houston Delegation Members:

On behalf of the Greater Houston Partnership, representing the business community of the 12-county greater Houston region, I am writing to express our support for the City of Houston's request for state funds to improve the Lake Houston dam.

More than five years after Hurricane Harvey slammed into the Houston region, we continue to rebuild and implement critical flood resiliency measures to ensure our economic vitality and quality of life. While the storm revealed many challenges, Lake Houston and the necessary flood gate improvements would prevent a recurrence of the devastating residential flooding that forced thousands out of their homes in the aftermath of Harvey. The outdated infrastructure of the Lake Houston dam – built in 1953 – was quickly overwhelmed with water being discharged from 11 tributaries at a rate of 425,000 cubic feet per second. As originally designed, the dam currently has four small gates which release water at a rate of 10,000 cubic feet per second.

In response to the storm, the City of Houston, Harris County and others began work to add gates to the Lake Houston dam. Utilizing \$48 million in existing federal funds, the City has completed the planning process and has begun phase one of the project. However, total project costs are outside of the existing federal funding that has been allocated to date. The priority focus of the project is to fix the shortcomings of the dam by updating existing facilities and adding 11 new tainter gates to the Lake Houston spillway. This enables rapid lowering of lake levels in advance of a flood, which will drastically reduce the flooding risk for over 5,000 residential, commercial, and industrial structures. This is the first phase in extending the life of a 70-year-old dam and ensuring our residents and businesses are adequately protected in advance of the next flooding event.

We greatly appreciate the significant support you have already provided to our region as we continue to rebuild and increase our flood resiliency. The funding allocated by our elected officials over the past several legislative sessions to support major resiliency and recovery projects has been critical and we appreciate your efforts to ensure those financial resources were made available. We ask you to consider an additional appropriation to ensure the total project costs for Lake Houston dam improvements are met while preserving the water rights of residents around Lake Houston and Lake Conroe. We appreciate your consideration of this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Taylor Landin', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Taylor Landin
Chief Policy Officer
Greater Houston Partnership