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Cornyn, Vela Host Texas Officials To Discuss Joint Efforts To End Texas Water Shortage

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) and U.S. Representative Filemon Vela (TX-34) today hosted a meeting with various elected officials and stakeholders from the Rio Grande Valley, including State Representative Eddie Lucio, III (Brownsville), Texas Water Development Board Chairman Carlos Rubinstein, and Rio Grande Valley Partnership President Julian Alvarez, to discuss joint efforts to address Mexico’s failure to uphold its water obligations and eliminate the deficit owed to the U.S.

Under a 1944 Treaty, Mexico is required to deliver average annual allotments of water to the Rio Grande Valley. Sen. Cornyn and Congressman Vela have previously introduced the [WATER Act](#) and met with Mexico’s Ambassador to the U.S., Medina Mora, to discuss a pathway forward earlier this year. Unfortunately, Mexico is still behind on water deliveries to the U.S., and further action is needed to produce a solution in the long-term interest of South Texans.

Click [here](#) to download footage of the meeting. A picture of the meeting is attached.

“Because the obligations of this treaty have not been met, Texas farmers, ranchers, and small businesses have lost hundreds of millions of dollars,” **said Sen. Cornyn**. “I want to thank everyone who traveled from the Rio Grande Valley to Washington today to demonstrate a united front with me and Rep. Vela in working on this important issue. I’m hopeful we can soon remove the unnecessary uncertainty Texans face concerning their water supply.”

“Mexico’s continued non-compliance with the 1944 water treaty hurts South Texas’ farmers and municipalities,” **said Congressman Vela**. “I continue to work with Senator Cornyn, Carlos Rubenstein, Chairman of the Texas Water Development Board and Representative Eddie Lucio, III to solve this problem. The United States meets its treaty obligations to deliver water to Mexico on the Colorado River. If Mexico were to abide by the 1944 treaty and deliver water to South Texas on-time, we could focus on other issues such as increasing trade between our two countries.”

“It is hard to explain to water stakeholders in South Texas that despite the fact that the U.S. has never failed to comply with its obligations to deliver water to the Colorado and Rio Grande, we continue to have these problems with Mexico,” **said State Representative Eddie Lucio, III**. “It seems only fair that we treat Mexico with the same courtesy, or lack thereof, that they treat us. Every relationship requires two parties who are committed to one another and we are asking Congress to help establish a context for our relationship with Mexico to flourish.”

“The fundamental problem is that Mexico does not recognize the United States as a user under the treaty and does not set aside water for treaty compliance,” said **Carlos Rubinstein**. “Until that changes, water certainty for South Texas remains at risk.”

“The opportunity to meet with both Senator Cornyn and Congressman Vela only confirms how important the water issue is to the Rio Grande Valley and regional economic development,” **Julian Alvarez**. “We will continue to work with our local, state and federal partners on this very important issue.”

Full List of Attendees

U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX)
U.S. Representative Filemon Vela (TX-34)
State Rep. Eddie Lucio, III (Brownsville)
Carlos Rubinstein, Chairman, Texas Water Development Board
Curtis Seaton, Chief of Staff, Texas Water Development Board
Herman Settemeyer, Rio Grande Compact Commission
Julian Alvarez, President, Rio Grande Valley Partnership

