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**Senator Kolkhorst's Eminent Domain Reform Legislation Passes State Senate**

AUSTIN - The Texas Senate has passed Senate Bill 421, by State Senator Lois W. Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) to strengthen the private property rights for Texas landowners facing the threat of eminent domain. The legislation represents a major victory for property owners and now heads to the Texas House for consideration before heading to the Governor's desk.

"Texans believe in the right to 'life, liberty and property' which is granted to us in the United States Bill of Rights," said Kolkhorst. "This bill levels the playing field between those who own property, and those who seek to use eminent domain to take that property. It is vital to treat landowners with respect, dignity and fairness. That's why I am proud to work with the Texas Farm Bureau, the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, and the Texas Wildlife Association to deliver this solution."

Passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, Senate Bill 421 provides several major statutory changes to the Texas Property Code, which include: preventing low initial offers, improving easement terms and requiring meetings to ensure property owners understand the process and can have their question answered.

*From the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association:*

"I would like to thank Sen. Kolkhorst for her steadfast commitment to fixing an eminent domain system that is often abused and designed to favor private companies who subsidize their profits with the power of condemnation," said TSCRA President Robert McKnight, Jr. "Texans deserve better. We deserve an eminent domain process that is open and transparent; that is fair and respectful of our partnership in energy infrastructure, and that holds private condemners accountable if they don't do it right."

*From the Texas Farm Bureau:*

"When the law allows private entities to take private property, it should also protect the rights of those property owners. They cannot walk away from the table. They only have two options – accept an offer or get taken to court," said Russell Boening, Texas Farm Bureau president. "Eminent domain reform is the property rights issue of our time. We thank the bill sponsor, Senator Kolkhorst and we appreciate her leadership on this important issue."

*From the Texas Wildlife Association:*

"Texas landowners provide immense benefits to our fellow Texans. Clean air, clean water, food, fiber, and wildlife are all dependent on the open spaces managed by those good people. This legislation is about treating them fairly, which is simply the right thing to do. Texas Wildlife Association is very thankful to Sen. Kolkhorst for her leadership on this and proud to support her efforts." J. David Anderson, TWA Board President. ###