

State senator: Here's why Texas needs \$1 billion per year for water

Vote for my constitutional amendment to avoid water shortages.

By State Senator Charles Perry Oct. 23, 2025

There's an old expression in Texas. "You don't miss the water 'til the well runs dry." For too many Texans, the wells are running dry.

Population, water usage and economic growth data gathered in the 2022 State Water Plan by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) and presented to the Senate Committee on Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs, which I chair, show that by 2050, [Texas will suffer a water shortfall](#) of up to 5.74 million acre-feet per year under drought conditions. By 2070, the plan projects water shortages of up to 6.86 million acre-feet per year. Testimony presented to my committee by Texas 2036 suggested that, for various reasons, the water shortages projected in the plan are in fact underestimated.

If we don't start developing new water supply sources now, millions of Texans across the entire state could be left without access to sufficient water in just 25 years.

A map presented to my committee by TWDB projected that dozens of Texas communities in every corner of the state will face water shortages in excess of 25% of their total needs if drought-of-record conditions strike again in 2050.

These shortages will touch every Texas economic sector. Most at risk are our state's farmers and ranchers, who need water to irrigate their crops and water their livestock; our producers of oil, gas and minerals; our power companies, which depend significantly upon various types of steam-electric generation; and our manufacturers, especially the petrochemical industry.

Already, Texans are feeling the desperation of water scarcity. During the same May committee hearing, a farmer testifying on behalf of the Texas Farm Bureau revealed that, for the first time in his life, his South Texas farm had no water available for irrigation.

The Texas Association of Manufacturers testified that lacking water supply may cost Texas up to \$55 billion in economic development opportunities and 400,000 manufacturing jobs over the next several decades.

The Texas Chemistry Council refined everything down to a point by rightly stating, "the success of [Texas] being able to attract new [petrochemical industry] investment is going to be very dependent on water."

The facts make it clear. For Texas to sustain the rates of population and economic growth our state has enjoyed the last few decades, we must take action to secure additional water supply. Fortunately, [there is a solution](#). (AA note: this proposition uses \$1 billion in current state sales

tax revenue to improve water infrastructure, water conservation and more/deeper well drilling. Much of this is good and necessary, but will not be nearly good enough if temperatures continue to rise, as they will, as long as we are burning fossil fuels).

During the legislative session earlier this year, Rep. Cody Harris and I addressed this looming crisis with landmark legislation dedicating up to \$1 billion per year of sales tax revenue to the Texas Water Fund and allocating at least 50% of that funding for use on water supply projects.

Importantly, this legislation creates no new taxes. It simply means a portion of existing tax revenue will be dedicated to fund water infrastructure for a period of 20 years.

While we primarily focused on water supply development, we didn't overlook other important water infrastructure issues.

Recognizing the diverse set of water-related challenges that our state must confront, we allocated the remaining 50% of the dedicated funding for repairs and upgrades to existing infrastructure: plugging leaks and making aging water systems more efficient and cost-effective; constructing new water treatment and distribution infrastructure; constructing new wastewater collection, treatment and discharge infrastructure; acquiring agricultural water conservation equipment; and building flood infrastructure that protects Texans from tragedies like those suffered during [Hurricane Harvey](#) in 2017 and the July 4 [flash floods](#).

But the job is not finished yet. Before these funds become constitutionally dedicated, the voters must approve Proposition 4 in this year's election.

Water is critical to the future of Texas. No future Texan should go thirsty. No Texas farmer should lose his crops. No Texas employer should lose his business. No Texas employee should lose his job on account of a lack of water. The longer we wait to start addressing these problems with the necessary funding, the more costly it will be to solve them in the long run.

To ensure sufficient water supply for our children and grandchildren, and to do so at the lowest possible cost and inconvenience, I urge readers to vote "yes" on Proposition 4.

Charles Perry, R-Lubbock, represents District 28 in the Texas Senate.

Article link: <https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2025/10/23/state-senator-heres-why-texas-needs-1-billion-per-year-for-water/>

(AA note: But no mention of climate change being the cause, nor that their climate change denying oil/gas industries are making things steadily worse. A problem with denial is that you don't address the real cause).