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**Gulf Coast Waste Disposal Authority Ready for Leadership Role
in Proposed Coastal Spine**

GCA will work collaboratively toward a regional approach to storm surge protection

HOUSTON, April 4, 2017 – Gulf Coast Waste Disposal Authority (GCA) today declared storm surge protection a priority and stands ready to help shape a viable regional plan for a coastal spine project. SB 2265 was filed in the Texas Senate by State Senator Larry Taylor (R-District 11) yesterday. The companion bill, HB 4308, was filed today by Representative Wayne Faircloth. The legislation would make GCA responsible for driving the proposed coastal spine forward.

“For nearly 50 years, GCA has worked to protect the waters of the state of Texas, and our board and management understand the importance of this opportunity to protect the region from potentially devastating storm surge,” said GCA Chairman, Franklin D.R. Jones, Jr. “We thank Senator Larry Taylor for entrusting GCA with this important responsibility and we are ready to work collaboratively with local, state and federal governments as well as our region’s industries to make the coastal spine a reality.”

If passed and signed into law, the legislation would, contingent on federal funding, expand the territories of GCA to include Chambers, Galveston, Harris, Brazoria, Jefferson and Orange Counties. It would also expand GCA’s powers to include the operation and maintenance of a coastal spine. GCA would coordinate and work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to drive the project forward.

Despite years of discussion, the process of developing a regional approach to storm surge protection is in the very early stages. In December, the Joint Interim Committee to Study a Coastal Barrier System filed its report to the Texas Legislature recommending that the region come together to accomplish the following:

- Finalize plans for a coastal spine;
- Identify the organization that would drive the project forward; and
- Identify potential funding sources.

By naming GCA as the organization responsible for advancing the coastal spine project, the legislation represents a major step forward, if passed. Without a regional solution for storm surge protection, a major event could put the lives of millions of Texans at risk and threaten the region’s economy.

GCA’s expertise is the efficient, responsible management of regional industrial wastewater systems. GCA’s current activities involve a variety of industrial wastewater systems across the state, including



municipal and industrial wastewater treatment, solid waste operations and treatment of non-potable water. Because the authority's work now extends to encompass many types of water systems, GCA is seeking authorization from the state to change its name to Gulf Coast Authority.

It is important to understand that we are very early in the process. Not only does the attached bill require approval in Austin, all changes described in the bill are contingent upon securing all necessary funding for the construction, and operation and maintenance of the project. This legislation does not provide state funding and no federal funding has been secured for the coastal spine project at this point.

About GCA

Gulf Coast Waste Disposal Authority (GCA) is a governmental entity created by the Texas legislature in 1969 with the broad charge to protect the waters of the state of Texas, focused primarily at that time on Galveston Bay watershed. GCA has the authority to own and operate regional industrial and municipal wastewater treatment plants, water systems and solid waste facilities statewide and also has the authority to issue bonds for a variety of projects. For more information, visit www.gcwda.com.

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