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News Release

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Are We Ready Locally for Zero Waste?

Many years ago, then State Representatives Lou Nelle Sutton, Frank Madla, Frank Tejada and I stood at the perimeter of the proposed BFI Landfill in east Bexar County in opposition to its siting. SeaWorld was rumored to be planning to locate their theme park there, but that was not meant to be. I am not sure whether there was more anger over the simultaneous SeaWorld decision to locate in Westover Hills or heartbreak over the landfill being its replacement.

As a result of this and other landfill-siting fights exclusively fought here in South Bexar County, I vowed to stop feeding what I was fighting by reducing, reusing and recycling so that landfills and their expansions were not so necessary. I am not in denial about the vital role that our landfills play in our daily lives. They are a necessity but our efforts can bring balance to the process and make them less so especially in an urban county like Bexar County!

In keeping with my ongoing resolution to reduce, reuse and recycle, I will co-sponsor the annual Resource Recovery Roundtable along with AACOG, the City of Leon Valley, the City of San Antonio and Keep San Antonio Beautiful from **8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Friday, July 23, 2010, at the Leon Valley Activity Center located at 6421 Evers Road off N.W. Loop 410.** This forum seeks to enlighten the entire community in a dynamic setting as to the best practices in the area of reducing, reusing and recycling as seen by the sharpest thinkers and doers in Bexar and the surrounding Counties. You are cordially invited to this **free event** partially made possible by the three landfills that serve San Antonio and Bexar County: Texas Disposal Systems (TDS), Allied Waste and Waste Management!

Check out my web page for the program and other details at www.bexar.org, Commissioner's Court, Precinct Four, Resource Recovery Roundtable 2010.

The City of San Antonio just launched its "Pathway to Zero Waste" in a Ten Year Plan! Great!! Now just what does that mean? Lots, starting with education!

The City of San Antonio is to be appreciated for its leadership in providing its two-cart system: one cart for recyclables and one for trash. This makes the ability to recycle on a large scale financially feasible. Recyclables contaminated with trash have less or even no value, so they must be kept separated and clean.

What's next? Lots! Green waste recovery, primarily yard trimmings which make up about 30% of the waste stream, must be implemented. Also, commercial recycling at the various businesses, including restaurants, bars, apartment complexes, schools and military installations are critical to effective and comprehensive recycling.

In the end, what gets measured tends to improve! We must know how much space we have in our two primary Bexar County landfills. How much is an acre of landfill space worth? How much do we save by not sending waste to the landfill?

Come join us tomorrow at the Leon Valley Activity Center as we explore these questions and more!