



# TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE

## JERRY PATTERSON, COMMISSIONER

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Patterson: Call on Governor Perry to veto HB770

*Last-minute deal creates Open Beaches Act exemption for lawmaker's beach house*

**AUSTIN** — Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson today took aim at what he called a last-minute amendment that created an exemption to the Texas Open Beaches Act for an East Texas lawmaker with a beach house.

**Patterson urged Texans who love the beach to call Governor Perry's office at (512) 463-2000 and ask him to veto HB770.**

“Governor Perry has always welcomed public input and he’s reviewing a thousand or more bills now and your opinion is important,” Patterson said.

The Texas Open Beaches Act prohibits building structures on the public beach, ensuring that everyone is able to access and enjoy Texas beaches.

If HB770 becomes law, Bolivar beaches will be exempt from the Open Beaches Act.

Patterson said the proposed law is likely unconstitutional, and certainly will be if the Open Beaches Constitutional Amendment is approved by Texas voters in November.

“This proposed law would hurt more than it helps,” Patterson said. “If this passes, Bolivar will lose millions in state and federal funds related to hurricane recovery and coastal protection.”

If houses are built on the public beach or in the surf, a healthy natural dune system won’t develop. And houses built in the surf will break loose and become battering rams, destroying other beach homes, once the next big storm inevitably hits.

“This proposed law isn’t just bad for Texas, but bad for most of the folks on Bolivar,” Patterson said. “All so a select few will be able to rebuild on the public beach.”

Because the amendment was added in conference committee, the public wasn’t informed or able to comment on the change before House members unanimously voted to create the special exemption to the Texas Open Beaches Act.

“This was a covert, last-minute change that would have never passed on its own,” Patterson said. “The public never had a chance to testify on this change to the Texas Open Beaches Act. It would have never seen the light of day if they had. Texans need to let their voices be heard now.”

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