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To the members of the House Committee on Environmental Regulation.  
*Via hand delivery.*

April 26, 2021

**Re: HB 3477 by Rep. Rose - Supporting testimony of Public Citizen**

Dear Chairman Landgraf and members of the committee:

Public Citizen appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of HB 3477 by Representative Toni Rose, relating to the termination of corporate privileges for certain business entities under enforcement action for a violation of environmental laws.

HB 3477 allows the secretary of state to terminate corporate privileges for a business entity that is guilty of an environmental disaster. An “environmental disaster” is defined as a violation of environmental law “resulting in a significant harm to human life.” Unfortunately incidents of this type are all too common in Texas. Here are a few examples:

- January 24, 2020 – Watson Manufacturing – three dead after chemical plant explosion.
- November 27, 2019 – TPC Group – on the day before Thanksgiving, 50,000 people evacuate their homes after a chemical plant explosion.
- October 2019 – Aghorn Energy – gas leak kills two by exposure to hydrogen sulfide.
- March 18, 2019 – ITC fire and spill – chemical fire burns for days, contaminating local air and water.
- August 31, 2017 – Arkema plant explosion sends 15 first responders to the hospital.

HB 3477 would target only the worst chemical incidents. Factors to be considered when designating an environmental disaster include:

- Increase in diseases such as cancer
- Contaminated water or air
- A negative effect on quality of life

HB 3477 provides a business entity with an opportunity to seek reinstatement of its corporate privileges. The entity must meet remediation requirements described in the termination order.

Public Citizen supports HB 3477 because it provides another tool to hold responsible companies that cause environmental disasters.

I appreciate the opportunity and welcome questions at [ashelley@citizen.org](mailto:ashelley@citizen.org), 512-477-1155.

Respectfully,  
Adrian Shelley, Texas Office Director, Public Citizen

CC: Rep. Alex Dominguez, Rep. Jay Dean, Rep. Vikki Goodwin, Rep. Kyle J. Kacal, Rep. John Kuempel, Rep. Penny Morales Shaw, Rep. Geanie W. Morrison, Rep. Ron Reynolds