Good morning, members of GMA 14, and fellow stakeholders in our region's water future.

I'm Harry Hardman, Mayor Pro Tem of Conroe.

I'd like to begin by taking a moment to highlight the importance of our **ongoing joint planning cycle**—and the **upcoming revisions** to Desired Future Conditions, or DFCs.

Today, I want to focus on the **socioeconomic impact** that **additional available groundwater** will have on the City of Conroe.

As many of you know...
Conroe is the **county seat of Montgomery County**...
the **largest city** in the county...
and the **second-largest user of surface water** in Montgomery County under the Groundwater Reduction Plan.

From a growth perspective... Conroe has been ranked among the **Top 10 fastest-growing cities in America** several times over the past decade. While that sounds good, there are a lot of inherent challenges that come with that title.

Let me put that in perspective for you:

According to the U.S. Census Bureau...

- In **2021**, our population was **95,623**.
- By **2023**, it had grown to **108,153**.
- And this year, it stands at **122,325**—that's a **27% increase in just four years**.

Looking ahead, the projections are even more dramatic:

- **2030**: 166,496
- **2040**: 308,163
- **2050**: 570,368
- **2060**: 1,055,674
- And by **2070**... nearly **two million people**—**1,953,911**.

That's a projected **158% increase** from today's population.

A recent, comprehensive water-planning study by a third-party consultant has estimated that, even **with** our current surface water allocation, Conroe will need an **additional 11 to 13 new 2,000 gallon-per-minute wells** by 2037...
just to meet our projected growth.

(Shift tone to urgency, concern)

Despite our aggressive conjunctive use strategy...Conroe's rapid growth has **outpaced our ability to expand critical water infrastructure**. Our issue isn't the availability of more than enough additional groundwater – *we are blessed to have it*- it's the lack of the necessary additional wells and pipeline to capture and transport it.

This week, we are faced with the **unenviable possibility** of imposing a **citywide moratorium** on all new construction...
for at least 120 days.

If adopted, this moratorium would have a **significant negative economic impact** on our city.

This situation underscores the **critical importance** of the GMA—and our GCDs—in ensuring that the **HIGHEST practicable use of groundwater** is reflected in the DFCs, now and for the foreseeable future.

Conroe is **not alone** in facing the pressures of hypergrowth. This is a common challenge statewide, and I would hope that the GCDs in GMA14 would be looking to help MOCO achieve our significant water resources needs as we would help them achieve theirs if and when they face similar growth.

It is clear that our **only viable path forward**... is growth through **additional groundwater**. Please make the highest practicable use of groundwater a cornerstone of this cycle's DFC.

Thank you for your time - and for your commitment to this essential work.