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Statement by Senator Pete Flores on the One-Year Anniversary of the July 4, 2025 Hill Country Flood Disaster

Today, we pause to remember the lives lost, the families forever changed, and the communities impacted by the devastating Hill Country floods of July 4, 2025. One year ago, tragedy struck along the Guadalupe River and throughout the Texas Hill Country. We remember the children, counselors, camp leaders, residents, visitors, and all those whose lives were taken far too soon. We honor their memories, and we continue to lift up their families in prayer and support.

The events of that day tested the strength, resilience, and spirit of Texas. In the face of unimaginable loss, first responders, law enforcement officers, emergency management personnel, search and rescue teams, National Guard members, volunteers, faith-based organizations, and countless neighbors answered the call. Their courage, sacrifice, and selfless service saved lives, comforted grieving families, and helped begin the long process of recovery and rebuilding. Texas will always be grateful for their extraordinary efforts.

As Chairman of the Senate General Investigating Committee on the July 2025 Flooding Events, I have had the solemn responsibility of helping lead a thorough review of the Camp Mystic disaster and the circumstances surrounding this tragedy. The Committee's work, conducted jointly with our House counterparts, sought to uncover the facts, identify failures and prevent similar tragedies in the future. We owe it to the victims and their families to learn every lesson possible and to ensure those lessons result in meaningful action.

The Committee's report makes clear that improvements were needed in emergency planning, evacuation procedures, weather monitoring, communication systems, and coordination among local and state entities. While no legislation can erase the pain of what occurred, the Texas Legislature responded swiftly and decisively to strengthen protections for our children, our families, and our communities.

During the special legislative sessions that followed, Texas enacted significant reforms to improve youth camp safety, flood preparedness, emergency communications, weather monitoring, evacuation planning, disaster response coordination, and public warning systems. These reforms establish stronger standards and accountability measures designed to better protect campers, families, residents, and visitors across the Hill Country and throughout Texas. The work is not finished. The Camp Mystic investigation serves not only as a record of what happened, but as a foundation for continued improvement. We must remain vigilant in strengthening preparedness, enhancing coordination among agencies, and ensuring that emergency plans are not merely written, but practiced and ready when they are needed most.

Today, as we remember those we lost, we also recognize the remarkable resilience of the Hill Country. Communities have rebuilt homes, restored businesses, repaired infrastructure, and supported one another through grief and recovery. Their determination reflects the very best of Texas. May we continue to honor the memories of those lost by remaining committed to making our camps safer, our emergency response systems stronger, and our communities better prepared for future disasters. Let us never forget the lessons of July 4, 2025, and let us move forward together with purpose, compassion, and resolve.

God bless the families who continue to mourn. God bless the first responders, volunteers, and all who helped our communities recover. And God bless the great State of Texas