

October 4, 2014

Texas Ethics Commission

ATTN: Chairman Jim Clancy P.O. Box 12070

Austin, TX 78711-2070

Texas Ethics Commission Chairman:

*As we look forward to the 84th Legislative Session, legislators will be faced with a myriad of important issues to tackle. Education, transportation, immigration and many other subjects all loom large. While finding common ground and passing common sense legislation might be difficult, it is our duty as elected representatives to do so in order to protect the life, liberty and property of the people of Texas.*

*Last session, the legislative process played itself out over Senate Bill 346, including the rare act of the Texas Senate attempting to recall from the House a piece of legislation that the Senate had previously passed. Ultimately, the House ignored the wishes of the Senate and passed the bill. Governor Perry vetoed the bill and issued a stinging rebuke regarding the intent of the bill.*

*No doubt, next session, the Legislature will again debate the definition of a political committee and their reporting requirements. Whether it is in Committee, or on the floor of the House or Senate, we can expect this debate to be detailed and deliberative. Most importantly, this debate is the Legislature's duty and our task alone.*

*In his veto, the Governor described the "chilling effect" the passage of Senate Bill 346 would have on free speech in the State of Texas. We agree with the Governor and intend to promote our view in all debates on the subject next session.*

*Freedom of speech is perhaps the most essential freedom in our Republic and should be protected from intimidation by any government or individual seeking to abuse power. This truth should weigh heavily in the minds of every Texan, as more is revealed about the federal government's repeated attempts to stifle dissenting political voices - even through the IRS. Texas must not become Washington DC.*

*It is strongly suggested the Texas Ethics Commission will attempt to supersede both the role of the Legislature and the Governor's clear veto by enforcing some or all of the tenets of Senate Bill 346 through the TEC's rule-making authority. We the undersigned*

*strongly discourage the TEC from any attempt to usurp the constitutional authority of the legislative and executive branches by overstepping your authority. Legislating from the TEC bench - seeking to go around the legislative process to enact a law that failed the legislative process – is not something we will support.*

*Regards,*

*Bob Hall, Republican Nominee, SD 2*

*Paul Bettencourt, Republican Nominee, SD 7*

*Van Taylor, Republican Nominee, SD 8*

*Konni Burton, Republican Nominee, SD 10*

*Don Huffines, Republican Nominee, SD 16*

*Charles Perry, Republican Nominee, SD 28*

*Cc:*

*Texas Ethics Commission Members*

*The Honorable Rick Perry*

*The Honorable David Dewhurst*

*The Honorable Joe Straus*