



House of Representatives
The Legislature of the State of Texas

March 14, 2007

The Honorable David Dewhurst
Lieutenant Governor, Acting Governor, State of Texas
State Capitol
Second Floor East
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Governor Dewhurst:

The Texas Constitution provides that "in case of . . . the absence of the Governor from the State, the Lieutenant Governor shall exercise the powers and authority appertaining to the office of Governor until the Governor becomes able or qualifies to resume serving . . . or returns to the State" (Article 4, Section 16, Texas Constitution). We are informed that Governor Perry is currently outside the United States. As the current acting governor with the full power and authority of the office of the Governor, you, Governor Dewhurst, have the power to take corrective action regarding TYC immediately.

In accordance with your authority under Chapter 2104 of the Government Code, we call on you to place TYC under Conservatorship immediately. The indefensible record of failure and neglect in the TYC sexual abuse scandal and the subsequent cover-up of this scandal requires this action to protect the health and safety of the children who are the responsibility of the state. You can only compound this failure by allowing the current administration of TYC to remain in power. The conservator appointed shall assume all the powers and duties of the officers responsible for policy direction of the state agency. Conservatorship for or replacement of the entire TYC board has been overwhelmingly recommended by the full Texas Senate, the Legislative Audit Committee and the Joint Select Committee on the Operation and Management of the Texas Youth Commission.

As you know, on February 23, 2005, a volunteer math teacher at the Texas Youth Commission, West Texas State School, contacted a Texas Ranger about alleged sexual abuse at the TYC facility. The Ranger conducted an investigation into the allegations and authored a substantive report. The detailed report contained multiple accounts, from multiple sources, of horrific and incomprehensible sexual abuse of multiple children at the hands of multiple TYC staff members.

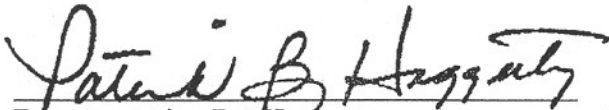
For two years, the TYC board appointees sat on this information and allowed these allegations to be swept under the rug. Furthermore, there is evidence that an internal TYC report about the sexual abuse scandal was altered while the appointees were serving on the TYC Board. This type of behavior is unacceptable and indefensible at best, criminal at worst.

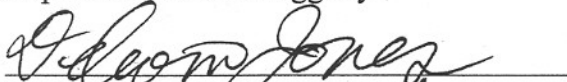
Texans will not stand for bureaucratic double-speak, finger-pointing, and responsibility-dodging. And neither will we. This is a time for bold actions. The safety of our children is at stake. Despite Governor Perry's failures in the TYC sexual abuse scandal thus far, the road to redemption can begin by placing the Texas Youth Commission under Conservatorship. The children of the state of Texas who have suffered horrific abuses deserve nothing less.

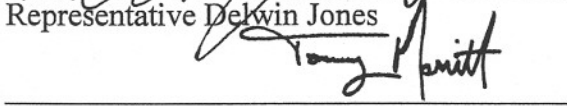
We also ask that you investigate your ability as acting Governor to remove and replace the TYC Board pursuant to Article 15, Section 9 of the Texas Constitution.

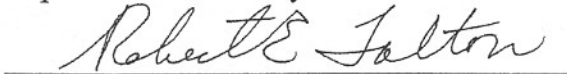
Right now you have the unique ability to stand tall and follow the advice of the full Senate and the bipartisan urgings from the Legislature. We humbly request that you immediately appoint an independent and non-partisan conservator for TYC.

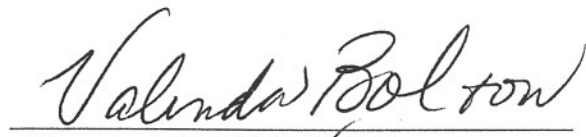
Sincerely,

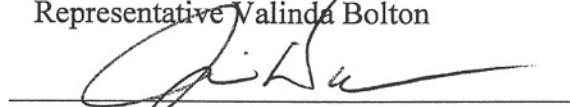

Representative Pat Haggerty


Representative Delwin Jones

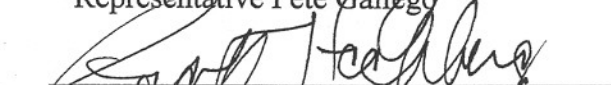

Representative Tommy Merritt


Representative Robert Talton


Representative Valinda Bolton


Representative Jim Dunnam


Representative Pete Gallego


Representative Scott Hochberg