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July 15, 2016

Honorable Joe Straus
Speaker of the House
Room 2W.13
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

Dear Joe,

Thank you so much for the honor of serving the State of Texas as an Ethics Commission appointee.

During my nearly five years of membership and chairmanship, I am pleased to say, much has been accomplished. My fellow Commissioners are the finest of Texans, and have kept eyes on the prize through long sessions and often gratuitous insult. They deserve any credit for our progress.

We have overhauled the workflow of the commission's staff to allow the most common and minor filing issues to resolve fairly and quickly through a set of guidelines crafted carefully by Jim Clancy during his tenure as chair. We have used the efficiency of those changes to be more purposeful in our enforcement efforts, initiating investigations and complaints that reflect important current issues in our area. Many of those issues involve local disclosure filing schemes that are woefully outside the statutory framework. Expanded educational efforts, with seminars around the state have also promoted that same cause. We have delivered three major software re-writes at the cost, and within the time table promised to the legislature, in order to bring aging legacy systems forward for the benefit of all agency constituencies. We have worked with legislators to update our statutory schemes to be consistent with court rulings and technological improvement. Ultimately, those efforts have had limited success, but we have tried very hard to be lucid and energetic in our assistance to interested legislators.

Finally, we have continuously re-articulated the grand bargain that is the foundation of this agency. Enforcement powers are limited, but disclosure requirements are broad. In many courtrooms, state and federal, we have defended those disclosure statutes and have kept them intact.

I am of course available to you and to the agency for any assistance I might render in the future, but the demands of my other commitments have led me to conclude that I will resign my commission membership effective July 31, 2016.

Very Truly Yours...and God Bless Texas of course!



Paul W Hobby