



TEXAS YOUTH COMMISSION

CHERYLN K. TOWNSEND
Executive Director

October 31, 2011

Senator John Whitmire
Dean of the Texas Senate
Capitol Office
PO Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Senator Whitmire:

I share your strong concerns as expressed in your letter of October 28, 2011 about the well-being of youth under the care of the Texas Youth Commission and the services provided by psychologist Dr. Walter Quijano. Dr. Quijano's extremely inflammatory statements in multiple adult offender death row cases during the sentencing phase reflect a prejudicial or racial perspective that is totally unacceptable in the rehabilitative treatment of juvenile offenders.

As soon as I became aware that TYC had a contract with Dr. Quijano, I ordered an immediate review. I found he had not provided any services to TYC youth since June 3, 2011, and I ordered staff not to utilize Dr. Quijano's services until a thorough review of his work was completed. A 30-day notice of termination of his contract was sent to Dr. Quijano on October 28, 2011.

My initial review determined that Dr. Quijano provided services related to education at the Al Price, Crockett and Corsicana facilities. These services were limited to individualized evaluations for select youth to determine whether a referred student had a learning disability and the nature and extent of the youth's special education needs. He also provided aftercare counseling services for the Houston District Office to youth who had previously participated in the Sexual Behavior Treatment Program during their stay in a secure TYC facility.

At no time did Dr. Quijano ever participate in any TYC decisions to determine any youth's length of stay, program completion, risks to re-offend, or transfer or discharge. However, I have ordered staff to review every case in which Dr. Quijano provided services to determine the appropriateness of his counseling and to ensure that no youth has been negatively impacted by his bias.

I will provide you with the results of my review as soon as it is completed. Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cheryl K. Townsend".

Cheryl K. Townsend
Executive Director