

LOBBY WATCH



★ TEXANS FOR PUBLIC JUSTICE 609 W. 18TH ST., SUITE E, AUSTIN, TX 78701 PH: (512)472-9770 FAX: (512)472-9830

Paxtoncare:

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AG Socializes Medicine For a GOP Functionary

“Ye shall know them by their fruits.” --Matthew 7:16

What would Jesus say about public officials who go to great lengths to deny taxpayer-funded health benefits to the less fortunate—even as they bend over backwards to maintain such benefits for themselves?

The *Dallas Morning News* recently [reported](#) that indicted Attorney General Ken Paxton secretly kept two top aides on the state payroll a month after they had left their jobs. One ghost worker, former First Assistant Attorney General Charles ‘Chip’ Roy, resigned March 9th to head Ted Cruz’s Trusted Leadership Super PAC. A Paxton spokesperson explained last week that Roy “is currently on emergency leave through June 10th,” an arrangement that let him keep receiving all the benefits accompanying his \$195,000 annual state salary.

The Texas laws Paxton swore to uphold do not appear to allow Roy to draw state pay and benefits while working full time for a Cruz presidential PAC. Under fire this week, Paxton’s office told the [Houston Chronicle](#) that it would retroactively record Roy as leaving the state payroll effective April 7, when his accrued vacation ran out.

Meanwhile Roy issued a statement. “The terms of my resignation included,” he wrote, “an option for leave beyond my earned vacation and holiday time. The primary benefit to me would have been health care coverage in light of being in the five-year window after Stage 3 Hodgkins Lymphoma. My plan has been to go off payroll at OAG using only my earned vacation and holiday time unless it were absolutely necessary to stay on pending the uncertainty of medical tests and subsequent employment. Yesterday I was blessed to receive an all-clear from my oncologist.”

It is wonderful that Roy is conquering cancer. It’s repugnant that this patient spent so much time trying to deny others a low-rent version of the taxpayer-funded health services that he enjoyed—and even sought to retain after quitting his state job.

As chief of staff to Sen. Ted Cruz in 2013, Roy helped his boss execute a career-defining effort to go to the brink of a government shutdown to force Democrats to defund Obamacare. Many Republicans say that doomed-to-fail incident shows Cruz’s willingness to harm the party to boost his own brand. “I can’t accept the premise

that we miscalculated on Obama in the slightest,” Roy later [told](#) the *Washington Post*. “The Republican leadership literally cowered in the corner, afraid of the word ‘shutdown.’”

Months before that shutdown gambit Republican House Majority Leader Eric Cantor introduced a bill to take care of sick Americans during a six-month gap in the implementation of Obamacare. Cruz spearheaded a successful effort to “kill” that bill, arguing that such measures undermine the message that Obamacare must be repealed in its entirety.

BuzzFeed [obtained](#) the Cruz camp’s emails. One by Roy said that the Cantor crowd wanted to “create a message in support of funding parts of Obamacare ... build upon the misguided notion that pre-existing conditions should be taken care of by government (and thus undermining the very purpose of getting insurance) and create a ‘win’ that only wonks on list-serves [sic] in DC get excited about.”

Three years later, that email’s author appears to have conspired with the Texas Attorney General Paxton to stretch—or break—state laws to ensure that he would have taxpayer-funded coverage of a serious preexisting condition while he ran a super PAC for a presidential candidate seeking to repeal Obamacare.

Cruz and Paxton, meanwhile, promoted each other’s anti-Obamacare careers. Then state Sen. Paxton tweeted during the 2013 shutdown stunt, “I am proud to stand with @SenTedCruz in his fight to#DefundObamacare.” Five months later Cruz quoted the scripture “Know them by their fruits” to a Texas Christian conservative base in promoting “my friend Ken” in his run for attorney general.

Future state ghost employee Chip Roy ghost wrote Rick Perry’s 2010 screed “Fed Up!” “The premise of Obamacare is that our health is not our responsibility but the public’s,” Roy wrote six years before scheming to ensure that taxpayers would cover his own cancer care. The man who would later worry about covering his preexisting condition then denounced the cost of Obamacare Medicaid expansion. It “will prompt an especially huge surge in spending because those newly eligible for coverage will largely represent high-risk groups that will demand more expensive care.”

Obamacare is guilty of providing expensive care for high-risk groups. Yet it pales by comparison to the per capita cost of keeping a cancer survivor on a ghost payroll at \$200,000 a year plus benefits. ·



Ted Cruz, Greg Abbott, Ken Paxton and Dan Patrick oppose Obama immigration policies that could open borders to Canadians, Cubans or anyone seeking the generous Texas health benefits Chip Roy enjoyed.