

LOBBY WATCH

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

Busted!

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Goldman and Chick Lobbied For Mug-Shot-Removal Racket

What Revolving-Door Bush and Straus Aides Won't Do for \$50,000.

One of the digital age's more despicable business models publishes police mug shots on the Internet and charges people to make their mugs go away.

Convicted Florida credit-card thief Craig Robert Wiggen is credited with founding the industry, spawning dozens of competitors.¹ Kyle Prall, an Illinois judge's son with his own youthful marijuana and drunk-driving convictions, pioneered the industry in Texas. Prall helped found Citizens Information Associates LLC, known online as Bustedmugshots.com.²

The industry says it performs a First-Amendment service by informing the public about crooks. Yet mug shots record arrests—not convictions—and the sites thrive by selling out their alleged civic duty for a price.



Adam Goldman

Mothers Against Drunk Driving and many law enforcers do not see the benefit of these sites. A

year before Travis County District Attorney Rosemary Lehmborg's drunk-driving [mug shot](#) went viral, one of her lieutenants criticized such sites for publishing "garbage" that destroys lives.³ The Irving Police Department fought industry requests for mug shots in 2010, only to be [overruled](#) by the Texas Attorney General.

Other pushbacks against mug-shot rackets include recent [civil litigation](#) and legislation. On March 7, 2013 Texas Senator Tommy Williams and Representative Ruth Jones McClendon both introduced bills to rein in abuses.⁴

Those Internet-posted bills seemed to catch the mug-shot industry off guard. The Senate *unanimously* approved its bill—which went [unopposed](#) in a public hearing—in less than a month. By the time that bill hit the House, Prall had hired lobbyists Adam Goldman and Craig Chick (former aides to George W. Bush and House Speaker Joe Straus, respectively).



Craig Chick

To remove these photos, contact reputation repair experts at www.InternetReputation.com.

From the outside, it's hard to see what Prall got for his money. Ex-Speaker's aide Craig Chick [registered](#) against the bill during a House hearing in late April. Yet Chick declined to publicly explain why the industry should not be throttled.

The new law that took effect last September hits the mercenary industry hard. It requires sites to accurately depict the filing and disposition of criminal charges. They must also promptly verify, correct or remove disputed information at *no cost* to the victim. And the law makes them liable for information that courts expunge or shield. For each such violation, an offender could have to pay \$500 to both the victim and the state, as well as court costs.

Under the new law Busted's CEO has developed a sudden interest in politics, giving a total of \$11,000 to a bipartisan slate of eight Texas House members. Meanwhile, Prall's website touts new mug-shot-removal policies.

"We are in the process of altering our arrest record removal policy and are unable to remove this record at this time," it [says](#).

2013 Clients of Chick and Goldman at Capitol Partners Consulting

Clients	Min. Value of Contracts	Max. Value of Contracts
Am. Council of Engineering Firms	\$25,000	\$50,000
Citizens Information Associates	\$20,000	\$50,000
Crist Law Firm	\$50,000	\$100,000
Darden Restaurants, Inc.	\$60,000	\$125,000
Eastex Telephone Co-op	\$25,000	\$50,000
Google	\$50,000	\$100,000
Guadalupe Valley Telephone Co-op	\$25,000	\$50,000
Linebarger Heard Goggan Blair...	\$50,000	\$100,000
Metro. Transit Authority of Harris Co.	\$10,000	\$25,000
Murphy Oil Corp.	\$50,000	\$100,000
Oncor Electric Delivery Co., LLC	\$50,000	\$100,000
Richie's Pharmacy & Medical Supply	\$75,000	\$150,000
TX Association of Realtors	\$10,000	\$25,000
TOTALS	\$500,000	\$1,025,000

"Effective immediately, we will no longer be accepting payment for any record removal. Please check back with us in the next few weeks for further information and removal instructions for expunged, sealed or deceased cases."

Busted!

Beneficiaries of Kyle Prall's New Political Activism

Amount	House Recipient	Date	Prall's Reported Affiliation
\$2,500	Dwayne Bohac (R)	11/26/13	Citizens Info. Associates LLC/CEO
\$2,500	Lyle T. Larson (R)	9/25/13	Citizens Info. Associates LLC/Owner
\$1,000	Travis P. Clardy (R)	11/26/13	Citizens Info. Associates/CEO
\$1,000	Larry D. Gonzales (R)	11/22/13	Citizens Info. Associates LLC/Owner
\$1,000	'Poncho' Nevarez (D)	9/25/13	
\$1,000	Jonathan Stickland (R)	12/23/13	Self Employed/Consulting
\$1,000	Senfronia Thompson (D)	10/23/13	
\$1,000	Jason Villalba (R)	9/25/13	Citizens Info Associates/CEO
\$11,000	TOTAL		

Notes

¹ "Mugged by a Mug Shot Online," *New York Times*, October 5, 2013.

² "Shakedown or Public Service? Mug Shot Websites Spread," *Reuters*, September 20, 2012.

³ See "Shakedown" above.

⁴ [SB 1289](#) and [HB 2861](#).