



Hall of Shame:

April 23, 2013

12 Republicans Flip From Legislature to the Lobby

Predatory Lenders and Education Interests Eagerly Recruit Them.

A dozen recently fired or retired lawmakers joined the lobby so far this session. They reported up to \$2 million from 49 clients, with payday lenders and educational interests ranking high on the revolver client list.

The new revolvers are all Republicans. History suggests this has more to do with the minority party's negligible influence than any hypothet-

ical moral superiority. The five new revolvers whom voters fired (listed in red below) tended to boast fatter paychecks and more clients than the seven revolvers who chose to retire.

The new revolvers closed out last year with \$2.4 million in campaign funds. They can legally buy clout with that money by contributing it to the campaigns of public officials.

12 More Republicans Do Lawmaker-Lobbyist Flip

| Revolving-Door Lobbyist | Hometown; Ex-District | Min. Value of Contracts | Max. Value of Contracts | No. of Clients | Campaign Cash 12/31/12 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Rob W. Eissler | Woodlands; H-15 | \$200,000 | \$420,000 | 8 | \$624,707 |
| Burt Solomons | Carrollton; H-65 | \$175,000 | \$385,000 | 10 | \$935,108 |
| Sidney C. Miller | Stephenville; H-59 | \$165,000 | \$370,000 | 9 | \$0 |
| Vicki Truitt | Keller; H-98 | \$125,000 | \$250,000 | 4 | \$100,346 |
| Chuck Hopson | Jacksonville; H-11 | \$75,000 | \$150,000 | 3 | \$105,102 |
| Jim L. Jackson | Carrollton; H-115 | \$60,000 | \$125,000 | 2 | \$1,284 |
| 'Tuffy' Hamilton | Mauriceville; H-19 | \$50,000 | \$110,000 | 2 | \$0 |
| Florence Shapiro | Plano; S-8 | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | 1 | \$168,052 |
| Warren Chisum | Pampa; H-88 | \$0 | \$70,000 | 7 | \$152,193 |
| Rick Hardcastle | Vernon; H-68 | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | 1 | \$0 |
| Charlie Howard | Sugar Land; H-26 | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | 1 | \$300,311 |
| Aaron Pena, Jr. | Edinburg; H-40 | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | 1 | \$12,500 |
| TOTALS: | | \$975,000 | \$2,130,000 | 49 | \$2,399,603 |

Note: Voters fired the revolvers listed in red; the others voluntarily retired.

After profiling Vicki Truitt's transformation from House Financial Services Committee chair into a [payday-loan lobbyist](#), *Lobby Watch* caught two other revolvers hustling for predatory lenders. Burt Solomons followed ex-aide Carsi

Mitzner to lobbyist Angelo Zottarelli's [Capitol 405 Group](#). The 10 clients paying Solomons up to \$385,000 include Financial Service Centers of Texas, which is tied to payday lender Douglas Dwight Pruett.

Clients Hiring New Revolvers

| Client | Min. Value of Contracts | Max. Value of Contracts | Interest Category | Top New Revolver |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| *Texans for Education Reform | \$100,000 | \$200,000 | Ideological/Single-Issue | Shapiro |
| Barbers Hill ISD | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | Ideological/Single-Issue | Eissler |
| CenturyLink | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | Communications | Solomons |
| Consolidated Communications Hldgs | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | Communications | Eissler |
| Impact TX Communications, LLP | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | Lawyers/Lobbyists | Miller |
| Pearson, Inc. | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | Miscellaneous Business | Eissler |
| Kofile Preservation | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | Computers | Jackson |
| Snap Trends, Inc. | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | Communications | Miller |
| TX Restaurant Assn. | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | Miscellaneous Business | Hamilton |
| TX Retired Teachers Assn. | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | Labor | Truitt |
| *TX Pharmacy Business Council | \$25,000 | \$60,000 | Health | Hopson |
| ACE Cash Express | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Finance | Truitt |
| Atmos Cities Steering Committee | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Solomons |
| City of Stafford | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Ideological/Single-Issue | Howard |
| Education Resource Group | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Miscellaneous Business | Eissler |
| Financial Service Centers of TX | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Finance | Solomons |
| Harris Co. Dept. of Education | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Ideological/Single-Issue | Eissler |
| Sun Partners Capitol, LP | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Finance | Miller |
| TX Coalition for Affordable Power | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Solomons |
| TX Council of Community Centers | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Health | Truitt |
| TX Electric Co-ops | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Hardcastle |
| TX Hospital Assn. | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Health | Truitt |
| University of Houston PAC | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | Other | Hopson |
| Aransas/Alta Mesa Resources | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Miller |
| City of Fort Worth | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Ideological/Single-Issue | Solomons |
| CyrusOne, LLC | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Computers | Solomons |
| Oncor Cities Steering Committee | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Solomons |
| G&P Industrial | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Construction | Miller |
| KLD Energy Technologies, Inc. | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Transportation | Miller |
| TX Assn. of Community Colleges | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Other | Solomons |
| TX Auctioneer Assn. | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Miscellaneous Business | Miller |
| TX Conf. of Urban Counties | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Ideological/Single-Issue | Jackson |
| TX Technology Consortium | \$10,000 | \$25,000 | Computers | Solomons |
| Apache Corp. | \$0 | \$10,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Chisum |
| Beer Alliance of TX | \$0 | \$10,000 | Miscellaneous Business | Hamilton |
| BP | \$0 | \$10,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Chisum |
| Capitol 405 Group, LLC | \$0 | \$10,000 | Lawyers/Lobbyists | Solomons |
| Clean Carbon Technology Fdn. | \$0 | \$10,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Chisum |
| Goodyear Tire & Rubber | \$0 | \$10,000 | Transportation | Chisum |
| Dan Hinkle | \$0 | \$10,000 | Lawyers/Lobbyists | Chisum |
| Petroleum Wholesale, L.P. | \$0 | \$10,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Eissler |
| TX Academy Family Physicians | \$0 | \$10,000 | Health | Chisum |
| TX Assn. of Education Svc Providers | \$0 | \$10,000 | Other | Eissler |
| TX Nursery & Landscape Assn. | \$0 | \$10,000 | Agriculture | Miller |
| TX Propane Gas Assn. | \$0 | \$10,000 | Energy/Nat'l Resources | Chisum |
| SAS Institute, Inc. | \$0 | \$0.01 | Computers | Eissler |
| TOTALS | \$975,000 | \$2,130,000 | | |

Sid Miller is collecting up to \$370,000 from nine clients, including Greenville, South Carolina's Sun Partners Capitol, LP. Sun Partners' is associated with Integrity Texas Funding, LP, an auto-title lender that does business as Loan Max, according to the [Better Business Bureau](#).

Ex-House Public Education Committee Chair Rob Eissler is the No. 1 new revolver. Eissler reports that eight clients, dominated by education interests, are paying him up to \$420,000. A top Eissler client, Pearson Education, is battling critics who seek to rollback some of the almost *\$100 million a year* that the state pay the British company for school testing.¹

Florence Shapiro chaired the Senate Education Committee during the lucrative decade in which Pearson administered the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) test.² In late 2011 Shapiro announced that she would retire from the Senate to become an executive at Dallas-based Academic Partnerships, an online, virtual education vendor.³

Shapiro sits on the board of Texans for Education Reform and also lobbies on its behalf. This group pushes virtual education, charter schools and "parent triggers," which allow parents to convert crappy public schools into charters that may or may not be crappy. The No. 1 employer

of new revolvers, Texans for Education Reform also hired ex-Reps. Chuck Hopson and Aaron Pena.

The Texas Pharmacy Business Council was the only other client to hire more than one new revolver. This trade group for independent pharmacies hired Sid Miller and pharmacist Chuck Hopson.

Vicki Truitt, who served on the House Public Health Committee, scored two health clients: the Texas Hospital Association and the Texas Council of Community Centers, which works on mental-health and substance-abuse issues.

New revolvers led by Burt Solomons and Warren Chisum signed 10 energy-related clients. Solomons represents several local-government interests that promote lower gas and electric rates. Chisum now represents the oil, gas and coal interests that he would have regulated had he won his 2012 campaign for the Texas Railroad Commission.

Mike 'Tuffy' Hamilton lobbies for the Texas Restaurant Association and the Beer Alliance of Texas. Members of these alcohol-related trade groups are overseen by the House Licensing Committee, which Hamilton chaired. •

NOTES

¹ "Senator: Texas Not 'Dumbing Down' Standards," *Austin American-Statesman*, April 17, 2013. "[Education Inc.: How Private Companies Are Profiting from Texas Public Schools](#)," *Texas Observer*, September 6, 2011.

² Shapiro joined the Senate in 1993, chairing the Education Committee in the sessions from 2003 through 2011.

³ "Shapiro Taking Job with Academic Partnerships," *Texas Tribune*, October 14, 2011.