

# LOBBY WATCH



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

Swallow's Paydays:

November 25, 2013

## Dark-Money Texans Helped Install Utah's Rogue Attorney General

**Perry-Aide Jason Smith & Rove Attacked John Swallow's Opponent.  
Smith Now Works for Texas A.G. Candidate Barry Smitherman.**

Last year two Texans used dark money to help elect now-disgraced Utah Attorney General John Swallow. Swallow [resigned](#) Thursday, as an official [report](#) found that he knowingly failed to disclose personal financial details mandated by Utah's elections law.

*Lobby Watch* has [reported](#) that Jason Smith—national deputy political director of Perry's presidential campaign—formed a dark-money non-profit called "[It's Now or Never](#)." In its top expenditure, that shady group paid \$140,000 to Rove's Crossroads Media for ads attacking Swallow's GOP primary opponent: Sean Reyes.

Days after Swallow took office this January, indicted businessman Jeremy Johnson alleged that Swallow had advised him to evade federal fraud charges by bribing U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. Reid denied knowledge of the affair and Swallow said he merely referred Johnson to his enterprising lobbyist pal Richard

Rawle (Swallow had served as counsel to the Rawle-founded payday lender [Check City](#)).<sup>1</sup>

This year the [Alliance for a Better Utah](#) filed a [complaint](#) with the lieutenant governor's office alleging that Swallow broke election law by failing to disclose a slew of personal business interests. Utah's top lawyer failed to disclose a \$17,000 debit card he received from Check City, a \$15,000 payment from Rawle, and \$23,500 that Rawle passed on to him from Johnson.

"The things I've done have been cast in the worst possible light," Swallow said in his resignation Thursday. "I have been 100 percent ethical and honest in all my dealings." The [report](#) that Utah's lieutenant governor's office released Friday found that Swallow's "non-disclosure was planned and deliberate." His explanations "raise numerous questions of credibility," it added, "in light of internal inconsistencies and conflicting evidence."

A year after his dark-money attacks helped install Swallow, Jason Smith now advises the Texas attorney general campaign of Barry Smitherman. A former Harris County prosecutor, Smitherman has been a Perry appointee to the Public Finance Authority, the Public Utility Commission and to his current post on the Texas Railroad Commission.

Jason Smith also is billing 13 lobby clients up to \$300,000 this year. His top lobby clients include three units of Harris County's government, multi-family housing developer Madhouse Development, the Texas Public Employees union and Riverbend Water Resources District, a [controversial](#) water conservation district in northeast Texas.



Jason Scott Michael Smith

### Jason Smith's 2013 Texas Lobby Clients

Client	Min. Value of Contracts	Max. Value of Contracts
Madhouse Development Services	\$25,000	\$50,000
Metro. Transit Authority of Harris Co.	\$25,000	\$50,000
Riverbend Water Resources District	\$25,000	\$50,000
TX Public Employees Assn.	\$25,000	\$50,000
Harris Co. Commissioners Court	\$10,000	\$25,000
TX Craft Brewers Guild	\$10,000	\$25,000
Cross Oak Group, LLC	\$0	\$10,000
Harris Co.- Houston Sports Authority	\$0	\$10,000
Motorola	\$0	\$10,000
NETData	\$0	\$10,000
TX Bar and Nightclub Alliance	\$0	\$10,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> "Utah Official Fights Allegations of Bribery," *Wall Street Journal*, January 23, 2013.