

News Release

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TRMPAC Treasurer Fails To Disclose Amount of Cash ‘Gift’ He Took From Kingmaker Bob Perry

- Bill Ceverha Conceals How Much Houston Tycoon Gave Him.
- TPJ Files Complaint With Texas Ethics Commission.

Austin, Texas: Watchdog group Texans for Public Justice today filed a complaint with the Texas Ethics Commission (TEC) alleging that William “Bill” Cerverha—the former treasurer of Tom DeLay’s defunct Texans for a Republican Majority PAC (TRMPAC)—failed to disclose the value of a check that Houston homebuilder Bob Perry, gave him as a gift in 2004. Perry was TRMPAC’s largest individual donor and is the top political donor in Texas.

As a Texas Employees Retirement System trustee, Ceverha files annual personal financial disclosures with the TEC. Ceverha filed his most recent statement, covering calendar 2004, on June 23, 2005. In that report Ceverha discloses that Bob Perry gave him a gift “check” but fails to disclose the dollar value of that payment.

“Mr. Ceverha’s disclosure is woefully inadequate,” said Texans For Public Justice Director Craig McDonald. “Any reasonable interpretation of Texas disclosure laws would require Mr. Ceverha to report *how much* money Mr. Perry gave him. Ceverha needs to tell us more.”

As TRMPAC Treasurer during the 2002 Texas elections, Ceverha failed to report approximately a half-million dollars in TRMPAC contributions. Acting on a civil complaint against Ceverha, State District Judge Joseph Hart ruled on May 26, 2005 that Mr. Ceverha’s TRMPAC disclosure omissions violated state law. Judge Hart ordered Ceverha—who has since declared personal bankruptcy—to pay \$196,660 in damages.

“Mr. Ceverha has a disturbing history of misleading the people of Texas through incomplete financial disclosures,” McDonald said. “We hope the Texas Ethics Commission will require him to tell the public whom he ostensibly serves how much money he took from Bob Perry.”

The TEC considers an incomplete filing to be a late filing. An individual responsible for filing a late statement is liable for a civil penalty of \$500. Failure to file could also trigger a Class B misdemeanor

criminal offense. (Government Code Sections 572.033 & 572.034.)

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Texans for Public Justice is a non-profit, non-partisan research and advocacy organization that tracks the role of money in Texas politics.