

2011

The Rick Perry Primer

Texans for Public Justice

Who is this guy? Who are his cronies? Who gave him \$102 million?
Learn about some of Rick Perry's many conflicts and controversies.

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Texas Governor Rick Perry is unknown to much of America. ***Texans for Public Justice*** (TPJ) has followed this politician since he became governor in late 2000, publishing numerous reports on Perry's politics and policies.

Much of this research focuses on Perry's fundraising activities and the connections between his contributors and his official actions. We also have kept a critical eye on Perry's economic development initiatives and privatization schemes, as well as his occasional ethical lapses.

With talk of a Perry presidential campaign escalating, this report summarizes highlights of a decade of Perry-related research.

- Texans for Public Justice

Perry Primer: Campaign Cash & Conflicts

- **Perry's \$102 Million War Chest**

As Texas' longest-serving governor, Rick Perry raised \$102 million for his Texans for Rick Perry state campaign committee from 2001 through 2010. Half of this money (\$51 million) came from 204 mega-donors who each supplied \$100,000 or more. This \$102 million does not include funds that Perry raised for his inaugural committees and or Republican Governors Association.

[View a list](#) or [download a spreadsheet](#) of the 204 PACs and individuals that contributed \$100,000 or more to Texans for Rick Perry.

Download a [complete list](#) (12 MB csv file) of 86,000 itemized contributions that Texans for Rick Perry reported from 2001 thru 2010. (Donor list updated to include contributions through June, 2011)

[View a breakdown](#) of Perry's contributions by economic sector.

- **Perry Political Appointees**

Gov. Perry tapped 3,995 appointees 5,662 times to serve on state agencies, boards and commissions between January 2001 and February 23, 2010 (he appointed some individuals to multiple posts).

Perry's campaign collected \$17,115,865 from 921 of these appointees or their spouses from 2001 through June 2010. Gubernatorial appointees accounted for 21 percent of the \$83.2 million that Perry raised during that period. See TPJ's [Governor Perry's Patronage](#).

- **Perry Pockets \$6 Million from Regent Appointees**

Perry has collected almost \$6.1 million from the 155 people whom he has appointed to be regents of Texas universities. Read TPJ's [report](#) and a *Houston Chronicle* [editorial](#) on "unseemly" appointee fundraising.

- **A Top Perry Donor's Nuclear Dump**

TPJ's [Lobby Watch](#) wonders how Perry appointees can regulate the out-of-state nuclear waste pouring into a West Texas dump that's owned by a top gubernatorial donor.

- **Homebuilder Bob Perry--the Governor's Biggest Asset**

Gov. Perry's biggest lifetime donor is homebuilder Bob Perry (no relation). TPJ [summarizes](#) Bob Perry's history of dirty politics.

- **Soliciting Under the Influence**

The *Dallas Morning News*' Wayne Slater reported in August 2009 that Gov. Perry's Alcoholic Beverage Commission chair urged owners of drinking establishments that he regulates to give to Perry's campaign.

- **Perry Backers Switch to Hutchison**

A TPJ [report](#) and an *Austin American-Statesman* [article](#) look at ex-Perry supporters who backed Republican gubernatorial rival Kay Bailey Hutchison.

- **Perry's Inauguration Donors**

Lobbyists, executives and corporations with state business dominate big donors who forked over \$2 million for Perry's most recent inaugural party, Wayne Slater reports in the [Dallas Morning News](#).

Perry Primer: Job Subsidies & Privatization

- TPJ's [Phantom Jobs - The Texas Enterprise Fund's Broken Promises](#) and [Recession Pounds Perry's Jobs Fund](#) reveal that many Enterprise Fund grantees failed to meet their job targets in 2008 and 2009.
- In ["Slush Fun"](#) the Texas Observer's Dave Mann tracks the web of Enterprise Fund grantees that contributed to the Republican Governor's Association or Gov. Perry.
- Did Sematech cheat Texas by leaving the state amidst a \$40 Million subsidy deal? A TPJ [letter](#) urges top Texas officials to investigate if Sematech violated its \$40 million Enterprise Fund contract and to recover any "funds that failed to deliver the promised benefits."
- [Did Contributions Grease \\$50 Million Enterprise Fund Deal?](#) TPJ's Lobby Watch reports that Texas' top officials took \$1.4 million from Texas A&M PAC supporters before awarding that university a controversial state grant.
- Texas corporate subsidy programs, which are among the nation's most wasteful, earn a C-minus for disclosure, according to [Good Jobs First](#).
- An [Austin American-Statesman editorial](#) calls for more accountability and transparency in Perry's corporate subsidy programs. A Fort Worth [Star-Telegram](#) editorial tells lawmakers to de-fund the governor's pet corporate welfare programs.
- **Coverage of TPJ's January 2010 Enterprise Fund report:**
Associated Press: [Perry changes Enterprise Fund contracts](#)
Dallas Morning News: [Fund not creating promised jobs](#)
Austin American-Statesman: [Report criticizes Enterprise Fund](#)
Associated Press: [Countrywide scrapped Texas pact in December](#)
Houston Chronicle: [Hutchison attacks Perry over Fund](#)

- ["Governor Handout" Trashes the Bailout](#)

A TPJ report is puzzled by Gov. Perry's sudden populist aversion to "using taxpayer dollars to bail out corporate America." After all, he previously awarded \$35 million in state tax dollars to two failed giants of the mortgage meltdown: Washington Mutual and Countrywide Financial. The *Houston Chronicle* hits a similar [editorial note](#).

- [Trans-Texas Corridor: Politicians Get Burned Paving Texas From Top Down](#)

The Texas Department of Transportation declared Gov. Perry's controversial Trans-Texas Corridor officially dead. While the governor's \$175 billion dream vanished, some of the toll roads will live on. The path to these roads was paved with \$3.4 million in campaign contributions and up to \$6 million in lobby expenditures. The [Dallas Morning News](#) reports that a lead lobbyist for the top Trans-Texas Corridor contractor is Perry's ex-legislative aide.

- [Privatizing the Lottery Raises Gambling Stakes](#)

Gov. Perry proposed privatizing the Texas Lottery to collect a quick \$20 billion. Industry projections make clear that the state cannot raise such a payout without a major expansion of Texas gambling, a TPJ report finds. Read a related *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* [article](#).

- [Lax Oversight Plagues Private Prisons](#)

For its own facilities, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice maintains data on the number of officers each facility employs and which employees have been disciplined. But it does not collect this data for privately-operated prisons, which cost the state over \$200 million a year. After squalid conditions prompted Texas to cancel one Geo Group contract, the company continues to operate nine other facilities in the state, TPJ finds.

- ["Texas blunders through privatization"](#)

Texas aggressively privatized state government social services, a policy that was supposed to save taxpayers a fortune. Instead, TPJ researcher Lauren Reinlie writes in the *Austin American-Statesman*, the state has sunk hundreds of millions of dollars into privatization boondoggles that squandered tax dollars and harmed Texans in need.

Perry Primer: Ethics

- **Murky Land Deal**

TPJ's Andrew Wheat reports in the [Texas Observer](#) on a sweetheart land deal that landed Gov. Perry almost \$500,000. A *Dallas Morning News* series takes closer looks at the deal:

[Murky land deals mark Gov. Perry's past](#)

[Perry's property buyer was "invisible"](#)

[White assails Perry land deals](#)

[Fraser failed to report Perry land deals](#)

- **How Did Gov. Perry Catch This Venereal Bug?**

Gov. Perry issued an executive order to vaccinate prepubescent girls for sexually-transmitted viruses that cause cervical cancer. TPJ's [Lobby Watch](#) asks, What triggered Perry's newfound interest in women's health? Was it Perry pal Mike Toomey—a longtime lobbyist for vaccine manufacturer Merck? The [Houston Chronicle](#) then reported that Merck contributed \$50,000 to a GOP fundraiser chaired by Gov. Perry.

- **Perry Mansion Spending Illegal, TPJ Alleges**

A pending TPJ [ethics complaint](#) alleges that the Perry campaign broke disclosure laws by not itemizing \$816,000 in governor's mansion-related expenditures on food, drinks and chefs.

- **High-Flying Corporate Jets**

Gov. Perry and 68 other top state officials burned through 348 lobby-funded travel gifts, a [TPJ report finds](#).

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