



# The Senate of The State of Texas

COMMITTEES  
Education  
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Veteran Affairs & Military Installations

SENATOR WENDY R DAVIS  
District 10

December 19, 2012

Governor Rick Perry  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Dear Governor Perry,

I know you agree with me that Texans deserve open and transparent stewardship of their hard-earned tax dollars. Your recent public comments about ending the use of budget gimmicks is a good example of your strong support for that principle. Of course, Texans expect that their leaders will promote transparency not only in state budgeting, but in the oversight of all tax supported endeavors. One such endeavor, the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, (CPRIT) is currently plagued by accusations of cronyism, conflicts of interest, insider deals, and a lack of transparency and accountability to the public. These issues are, understandably, tarnishing the public's trust in how hundreds of millions in voter-approved funds are being managed through CPRIT.

Given the importance of CPRIT's work in the arena of cancer prevention and research we should assure that we do all that we can to correct several apparent problems in the agency's administration of public dollars. Indeed, it should be one of our highest legislative priorities. Accordingly, I respectfully request that you designate CPRIT reform as an emergency action item for the 2013 legislative session. I would also urge you to call for an immediate moratorium on any further commercialization grants by the agency until the legislature can remedy concerns regarding these appropriations by CPRIT.

I plan to file legislation this session recommending new oversight and changes to existing statute that might bring greater transparency and accountability to Texas taxpayers regarding CPRIT's grant activities. I hope that I can work closely with you and your staff to help bring about meaningful changes to the oversight of this agency so that we can eliminate the possibility that public resources are being used to support individuals or efforts that are not in keeping with the enabling legislation's original intent.

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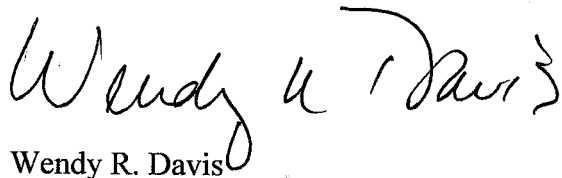
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As we move forward in repairing the now-tarnished reputation of this state agency, important reforms are necessary, including the need to:

- Evaluate the procedures utilized in the award of "commercialization grants" and whether the award of those grants is in keeping with the legislature's intent that CPRIT's funds be used to "create and expedite innovation in the area of cancer research" and to "promote a substantial increase in cancer research;"
- Evaluate whether private donors, through the CPRIT Foundation or otherwise, should be allowed to supplement the salaries of the agencies' employees, particularly where those donors have an interest in the awarding of those funds;
- Consider changes in law to make open and transparent the source of donations both to CPRIT and to the CPRIT Foundation to avoid cronyism, conflicts of interest and/or insider deals; and,
- Review the governing structure of the agency.

I look forward to working with you to see how we might restore the public's trust regarding the use of their tax dollars by this important state agency.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy R. Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy R. Davis  
State Senator - District 10