

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Enabling obstruction
Date: November 14, 2014 at 11:01
To: Michael Quinn Sullivan <letters@empowertexans.com>
Cc: [REDACTED]

Thank you, Michael.

I am cc'ing [REDACTED] so she will see my response to your alert.

I was among a small group of people here in Weatherford when our state rep Phil King stated that there is no speaker's race. Someone in the group had asked him if he were going to run for speaker.

Your post today is invaluable. I am passing it along.

[REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 14 Nov 2014 08:25:23 -0800
From: letters@empowertexans.com
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Enabling obstruction

By historic numbers, Texans affirmed the need for a strong, reform-minded conservative agenda in the general election. In statewide race after statewide race, in the primary and general election, Texans said they wanted conservatives and conservative policy action.

Yet your state representative, Republican Giovanni Capriglione, has [inexplicably come out in support](#) of liberal Joe Straus for speaker of the Texas House.

This is the same Joe Straus who has used his office to attack conservative state representatives — using the power of the speakership two years ago to [exact retribution](#) against staunch conservatives like State Reps. Wayne Christian and Jim Landtroop by drawing them out of their districts. This year, Straus' team went after conservative champions Jonathan Stickland, Charles Perry and Matt Schaefer.

Joe Straus' team has been attacking whistle-blowing UT regent Wallace Hall, who uncovered financial malfeasance and found that lawmakers were using their clout to get politically-connected (though academically under qualified) students admitted to UT Austin and to UT Law School. Straus empaneled a special committee to attack and silence Hall for the "crime" of attempting to hold a public institution accountable.

Straus' team has been working to implement in Texas the rules Lois Lerner and Barack Obama's IRS tried to impose nationally. His senior advisors have [referred to tea party activists as "idiots."](#)

That's what Giovanni Capriglione has signed on to support.

Giovanni Capriglione is supporting Joe Straus, who has thwarted all conservative reforms. Zero-based budgeting and strict constitutional spending limits are wildly popular among Texans, yet Joe Straus and his team have refused to allow even House debate on the issues. I bet Giovanni Capriglione tells you being a "fiscal conservative" matters? *Well, apparently not that much...*

It's even worse on pro-life issues, where Joe Straus — who received a [100% rating with the pro-abortion group](#) NARAL in his last session before being speaker — blocked all pro-life legislation last session. Not a single pro-life measure was given a public debate; all were blocked. It wasn't until Gov. Rick Perry put pro-life

reforms on the call of a special session, effectively working around Straus, did any action take place. You will recall that Planned Parenthood has praised Straus for his “tireless efforts” on their issues. And I bet Giovanni Capriglione tells you that “pro-life” issues matters most, right?

Copied below my signature block is just a partial listing of the conservative initiatives that Joe Straus blocked in just the most recent legislative session.

Yet that is who Giovanni Capriglione is supporting for speaker of the Texas House.

Texans have elected a strong, conservative state senate, led by taxpayer champion Dan Patrick. The senate is poised to pass substantive, reform-minded legislation. For example, newly elected State Sen. Charles Perry has introduced legislation for spending limits and zero-based budgeting; Sen. Craig Estes has offered legislation repealing the odious gross margins tax; Lt. Gov.-elect Patrick has vowed to attack the pervasive problem of property taxes.

Yet Joe Straus’ team has pledged to block the senate’s conservative reforms. Liberal Dallas State Rep. Jason Villalba, an ardent Straus supporter, said that Straus will make sure that [conservative initiatives “die.”](#)

Whatever else Giovanni Capriglione intends, Giovanni Capriglione is empowering a speakership team [publicly devoted](#) to opposing the conservative state senate’s reform agenda.

It’s likely Rep. Giovanni Capriglione hopes to have a “conservative” record, but it will be a record that fails to promote conservative reforms because of the Straus speakership. It will be a record based on playing defense, when Texans expect our elected officials go on the offensive.

Inexplicably, Giovanni Capriglione said [there was no speaker’s race](#). That’s simply not true; State Rep. Scott Turner, a dynamic conservative Republican, has filed for the office and is actively campaigning. Apparently there is enough of a race that Straus’ team has felt the need to run a publicity campaign.

But understand this: **the vote for the speakership hasn’t yet happened.** That won’t be until January 13, 2015. When that actual vote happens, Giovanni Capriglione will have to cast a lasting vote *for* the culture of retribution and obstruction that has defined Straus’ speakership, or *for* a fair, reform-minded conservative.

Giovanni Capriglione has regrettably taken a public position for the former. One hopes that upon reflection the vote will be cast for the latter.

Respectfully Yours,
Michael Quinn Sullivan



Michael Quinn Sullivan

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On recent public policy issues...

- Joe Straus refused to sign the Texas Budget Compact. (Press Release, 4/16/2012, Statement on Texas Budget Compact)
- Straus called the TSA Anti-Groping Bill “nothing more than an ill-advised publicity stunt.” (Texas Tribune, 6/24/2011, Updated: Straus Calls TSA Bill “Publicity Stunt”)
- In 2012, Straus and his hand-picked Appropriations Committee spent the entire \$8 billion budget surplus and took \$4 billion from

- In 2013, Straus and his hand-picked Appropriations Committee spent the entire \$8 billion budget surplus and took \$4 billion from the state's rainy day fund.
- Straus presided over a legislative session that increased total spending by 26% over the previous biennium—including taking \$4 billion from the state's savings account. (The Wall Street Journal, 6/7/13, Texas goes Sacramento)
- Straus and his allies repeatedly pushed for the state to expand Medicaid under Obamacare. (San Antonio Express-News, 3/6/13, Straus touts Medicaid action)
- Straus allowed passage of an amendment specifically banning funding for any school choice program in the state appropriations bill. (83rd Legislature, RV #169, Amendment 95 by Herrero to SB1)
- After the sunset bill for reauthorization of the Texas Lottery Commission failed its first record vote in the House, Straus organized a re-vote and passed the measure. (83rd Legislature, House Journal page 1764)

Among the conservative reforms killed by Joe Straus in the most recent legislative session included:

- Urging Congress to cease imposing the Obamacare contraception mandate on businesses, HCR 32 by Jonathan Stickland died in Select committee on Federalism and Fiscal Responsibility
- Monthly reporting requirement for abortion doctors, providing penalties, HB 2308 by Matt Schaefer, died in State Affairs Committee
- Allowing volunteer security staff with a CHL to carry a concealed weapon in the course of their service with church permission, HB 2535 by Matt Schaefer, died in Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee
- Requiring counties, cities, and school districts to list total outstanding debt and debt per capita on any ballot for a new bond election, HB 960, 961, & 962 by Scott Sanford, died in Elections Committee
- Repealing state renewable energy mandates and credit trading program, HB 2026 by Scott Sanford, died in State Affairs Committee
- Preventing school boards from discriminating against religious organizations seeking to use public school facilities during non-instructional time, HB 1525 by Matt Krause, died in Public Education Committee
- Providing penalties and definition for oppression by a law enforcement officer, HB 80 by David Simpson, died in State Affairs Committee
- Preventing local governments from prohibiting oil and gas development unless certain standards are met, HB 1496 by Van Taylor, died in Land and Resource Management Committee
- Preventing insider trading by state officials or employees, HB 1576 by Van Taylor, died in State Affairs Committee
- Protecting Texans from federal gun registrations, HB 872 by Jodie Laubenberg, died in Select Committee on Federalism and Fiscal Responsibility
- Prohibiting discrimination by institutions of higher education against faculty or students who research Intelligent Design, HB 285 by Bill Zedler, died in Higher Education Committee
- Protecting Texans from the Obamacare individual mandate, HJR 48 by James White, died in Select Committee on Federalism and Fiscal Responsibility
- Adopting Zero-based budgeting for all state agencies and institutions, HB 98 by Charles Perry, died in Appropriations Subcommittee on Budget Transparency and Reform
- Asserting state sovereignty under the Tenth Amendment and beseeching the federal government to cease any legislative or executive actions infringing upon Second Amendment rights, HCR 63 by Scott Sanford, died in Calendars Committee
- Closing the "judicial bypass" loophole allowing minors to receive an abortion without parental notification, HB 3302 by Matt Krause, died in Calendars Committee due to delay by State Affairs Committee
- Requiring elected officials to disclose contracts that relatives or business partners may have with the state, HB 524 by Giovanni Capriglione, died in Calendars Committee due to delay by State Affairs Committee
- Preventing state funds from being invested in companies doing business in Iran, HB 819 by Van Taylor, died in Calendars Committee
- Urging the U.S. Congress to repeal the Dodd-Frank Act, HCR 26 by Van Taylor, died in Calendars Committee
- Placing greater restrictions on eminent domain powers of the state, HB 1250 by Craig Goldman, died in Calendars Committee
- Preventing abortions after 20 weeks post-fertilization, HB 2364 by Jodie Laubenberg, died in Calendars Committee due to delay by State Affairs Committee
- Outlawing "ballot harvesting" vote-by-mail fraud, authorizing penalties, HB 1560 by Stephanie Klick, died in Calendars Committee due to delay by Elections Committee

- Establishing interstate voter registration cross-check to prevent duplicate vote registrations, HB 2372 by Stephanie Klick, died in Calendars Committee
- Preventing abortion service referrals in Public School sex education courses, HB 1057 by Jeff Leach, died in Calendars Committee
- Preventing school districts from offering marriage benefits to same-sex couples, HB 1568 by Drew Springer
- Preventing municipal bans of plastic bags, HB 2416 by Drew Springer, died in Calendars Committee
- Addressing coercive conditions imposed on the state by the receipt of federal funds, HB 1379 by Steve Toth, died in Calendars Committee due to delay by Select Committee on Federalism and Fiscal Responsibility
- Phasing-out the franchise tax, HB 607 by Scott Turner, died in Calendars Committee due to delay by Ways and Means Committee
- Establishing a Taxpayer Savings Grant Program to provide parents a choice in directing a portion of their child's state education money, HB 3497 by Scott Turner, died due to late referral to Government Efficiency and Reform Committee by Speaker
- Requiring school districts to post check registers online, HB 284 by Bill Zedler, died in Calendars Committee
- Removing limitations on the authority of the Attorney General to investigate alleged voter fraud, HB 289 by Bill Zedler, died in Calendars Committee

Be [taken off this list](#).