

Our Mission

Commission Shift is reforming oil and gas oversight by building public support to hold the **Railroad Commission of Texas** accountable to its mission in a shifting energy landscape.

About Us

Commission Shift **develops solutions** to protect consumer rights, prevent orphaned oil and gas wells, and ensure Texans have full access to information and participation opportunities at the Railroad Commission of Texas.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN TEXAS OIL AND GAS OVERSIGHT

Join Us!

Subscribe to Commission Shift's newsletter to learn about opportunities to voice your concern and talk to your legislator!



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**COMMISSION
SHIFT**



Conflicts of Interest in Texas Oil and Gas Oversight



What is a Captive Agency?

Railroad commissioners, who head the state oil and gas agency, may accept campaign contributions from the companies they make decisions about, raising concerns about potential bias. Texas' three sitting railroad commissioners raised **more than \$11 million** in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry, over **60% of their total fundraising income**.



Image Credit: Texas Monthly

Impacts of a Captive Agency

Commissioners have received campaign donations from company executives with cases pending before their agency, ultimately **ruling in these companies' favor**. More captive agency impacts include:

- Unlimited flaring permission
- Leaking unplugged wells
- Industry writing their own rules
- No language interpretation
- Weak public outreach
- Unresponsiveness to public input

Solutions

The Texas Legislature has a role to play in **separating state agencies from industry influence** including:

- Clarifying Texas law so that elected officials must recuse themselves from decisions that involve major campaign donors or companies they have a financial interest in.
- Limiting campaign fundraising periods to election cycles.
- Restricting who can donate and limiting campaign contribution amounts to \$5,000, just like statewide judicial races.



Learn More!

Our three part **Captive Agency series** with Texans for Public Justice, studies personal financial statements from the three railroad commissioners to see how close they are to the industries they oversee.



bit.ly/CaptiveAgency

Find summaries and recommendations at the QR code!

Contact Us

Has oil and gas pollution impacted you? We want to hear your story.



(956) 267-9116



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www.CommissionShift.org