

August 15, 2005

The Honorable Tom Craddick  
Speaker, Texas House of Representatives  
Texas State Capitol, Room 2W.13  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I write to express my concern about radio ads critical of the Texas Senate which aired in Alpine and across the state this weekend. The ads indicate they were paid for by your campaign. To my knowledge, this is the first time a presiding officer of one legislative chamber has purchased advertising directly attacking the presiding officer and members of the other legislative chamber.

Frankly, I question the wisdom of this decision. All legislation must pass through both chambers in order to become law. As such, it is critical that both the House and Senate - as well as their presiding officers - work together. No difficult problem has ever been solved by negative ads attacking a colleague. On the contrary, problems are solved by negotiating with your colleagues in good faith.

The radio spots you purchased loudly advertise the Legislature's failure. And, more importantly, they poison the well of good will from which every member of the Texas Legislature must inevitably drink. I never expected any member to work so diligently or act so decisively to destroy any hope of cooperation between the House and Senate - especially at a time when cooperation is so very crucial to our success. I particularly never thought that person would be the presiding officer of our chamber.

Letter to Speaker Craddick regarding radio advertisements

August 15, 2005

Page 2

In addition to undermining your own relationship with the Lieutenant Governor, your ads also place every other legislator in an awkward position. Each resident of Texas is represented by both a House member and a Senator. Imagine the difficulties both will have when they appear together at any public forum in their respective districts. I hope it was not your goal to force each to defend himself or herself against the other.

Texans are quite used to campaigns and advertising during the political season, but election season is still far off. By running ads now against fellow legislators (not to mention fellow members of your own party), you have elevated politics above both practicality and public policy. Unfortunately, that also means that Texas politics has sunk to a new low. Public confidence in our institutions of government is sure to follow.

Our time is better spent building bridges - not burning them. I respectfully ask that you withdraw the radio advertising now running and apologize to your fellow legislators for any offense your highly irregular actions may have caused.

Sincerely,

Pete P. Gallego

PPG/bp

c: Members, Texas House of Representatives  
Members, Texas Senate