

LONE STAR PROJECT

Fighting Back... with Facts



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April 10, 2007

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Abbott Ignored Juvenile Abuse for Months, But Now Claims Credit for Indictments

Media hungry AG had no appetite to prosecute TYC sex abusers last year

Attorney General Greg Abbott sent out a [press release](#) minutes after a Ward County Grand Jury indicted TYC officials Ray Brookins and John Hernandez for sexual abuse of juveniles. Abbott's release, however, failed to mention that his office was notified of the widespread abuse more than a year ago. Abbott's office made no effort to prosecute the sexual offenders or to bring their offenses to the attention of the media or the State Legislature. The Lone Star Project detailed Abbott's negligence in a recent report. ([Read the report here](#))

"If Greg Abbott cared as much about ending child sexual abuse as he does about his own press clippings, then Texas children would be much safer," said Lone Star Project Director Matt Angle. "Abbott twiddled his thumbs for over a year knowing that Texas children were living a nightmare of abuse under State supervision. Trying to claim credit now is the cynical and shameful act of a crass politician."

Abbott's office was formally notified of the widespread abuse at TYC facilities by Texas Ranger Brian Burzynski in a memo to Assistant Attorney General, William Tatum. The memo to Tatum pleaded for assistance saying he was dealing with, "a very weak prosecutor...that didn't want to [file charges]...He hasn't done anything with it and I am losing hope that he will." He goes on to ask, "Is this something that the AG's office could review and perhaps consider a prosecution on, or perhaps, assist the local prosecutor with?" ([See the email here](#)) Rather than immediately contact the Ward County DA and offer assistance prosecuting the case, Abbott's office ignored the crisis and allowed the abuse to continue.

Abbott's office did nothing to help the local DA or push the prosecution for almost a year before the local DA explicitly asked for help in January 2007. Even then, it has taken Abbott's office more than three months to win indictments of TYC officials with overwhelming evidence of sexual and physical abuse against them.

"Abbott's press release should have been titled – Slow, Incompetent and Uncaring," continued Angle. "No Texan should have confidence in an Attorney General who takes more than a year to prosecute serial child molesters."

Timeline:

February 21, 2006 - Texas Ranger Brian Burzynski sends a memo to Assistant Attorney General, William Tatum asking for the Attorney General's help.

2 day wait

February 23, 2006 – Ranger Burzynski sends Assistant Attorney General, William Tatum a reminder email. Tatum replies with a short email to Texas Ranger Brian Burzynski offering no help unless Burzynski could talk the local DA into asking for help

328 day wait

Jan. 17, 2007 – Ward County District Attorney Randy Reynolds requested prosecutorial assistance

83 day wait

April 10, 2007 – Attorney General obtains indictments

Total Wait from time Ranger Burzynski sought help to indictments: **413 Days**

What were the indicted men doing, while the Attorney General's Office did nothing?

John Paul Hernandez

After being allowed to quietly quit the TYC, "Hernandez was a principal at the Richard Milburn Academy in Midland." (Odessa American, February 21, 2007)

Richard Milburn Academy boasts on its website that, "The safety of its students and staff is one of RMA's top priorities. All RMA staff members are assigned Hall Duty shifts to ensure students are in their classes and that no visitor is unaccompanied. Where appropriate, RMA has on-site security guards and works with the local police department to maintain the safety of all students."

Ray Brookins

Once accused of the abuse, Ray Brookins quit his job at the TYC and "landed a job as a front desk manager for a swanky hotel in Austin." (The Houston Chronicle, March 21, 2007)


Ray Brookins was also updating his MySpace profile. (MySpace is a social networking website frequently used by children and young adults to talk with their friends) According to the Austin American-Statesman Ray Brookins used the name "XXXRayVijon" and "posted a photo of himself at the Adult Entertainment Expo in Las Vegas." (Austin American-Statesman, March 6, 2007)

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