



DAN FLYNN

★ DISTRICT 2 ★

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Austin -Tuesday, the House Transparency Committee conducted an extensive hearing on the grants and financial processes of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) and their Foundation, an attempt to clarify conflicting testimony between members of the Foundation and the Institute.

"As guardians of the taxpayers and their dollars, it is important that the inquiry is made into the utilization of resources and the procedure in which these resources are employed. When poor ethical decisions are made regarding the procedure and utilization of these state resources, and we as the elected body are made aware of these abuses, it is our responsibility to ensure that the constituency of the entire state of Texas is protected and answered to," stated Co-Chair Dan Flynn (R-Van).

Witnesses at the hearing included several members of the CPRIT Oversight Committee as well as three current Institute members who also served as former board members of the CPRIT Foundation, which has sense been dissolved. The Foundation has been under scrutiny for questionable management practices and is currently involved in talks with the Office of the Attorney General for the return of funds to the Institute.

Jennifer Stevens, Executive Director of the CPRIT Foundation, was asked, and encouraged, to testify at the hearing as an opportunity to provide clarification on her contradictory testimony provided at last week's hearing, but failed to appear, adding question to credibility.

Alternatively, Mrs. Stevens sent Texas Cancer Coalition (newly created foundation after the dissolution of the CPRIT Foundation) board member, Doug Allison, in her place.

Unfortunately, Mr. Allison was unable to answer the questions and concerns of the committee. Extensive testimony by Jimmy Mansour, Chairman of the Oversight Committee for the CPRIT Institute, attempted to provide clarifying information on many of the issues.

"When expenditures involving state taxpayer dollars, or dollars collected to support state activities, such as the Institute, are compromised, it is time to shut down that activity until all is accounted for and all outstanding questions are answered. Right now the the list of unanswered questions is growing and Mrs. Steven's failure to appear and testify at the hearing this week has only contributed to the concerns the committee has," said Chairman Flynn