



January 19, 2008

Letter to the Editor

Re: Tyroch's Campaign War Chest – It's Nothing to Brag About

Dear Sir:

I read with great interest recent reports highlighting that Republican candidate Martha Tyroch has thus far led the field in terms of dollar contributions ("Tyroch Raises Most Money for Campaign", 18 Jan 08). I am not too sure if I would be proud of that singular achievement. Seriously now, approximately 20% of her money has come from just one individual - multi-millionaire Drayton McLane Jr. – who, unlike the average voter-taxpayer, probably doesn't worry about the price of gas or where his next meal is coming from. Just think - in one fell swoop, Ms. Tyroch received a sum of money (\$19,801.00) that approaches the annual median income for some Bell County residents. Add to that the substantial contributions from other political lobbyists, like the Temple Area Builders Association and executive heads ranging from Scott and White down to UMHB – and well, these little factoids that give me pause. Will these contributions spur public debate or, more properly considered, should they be viewed as advance lobbyist requests for special earmark legislation and favored treatment? Should we not be morally outraged by this conduct when Presidential candidates contemporaneously ^{forcefully} argue that we need to get "big money" out of politics? _{Land}

We need a refresher course in civics, especially here in Bell County where we have already witnessed the value of our right to vote immeasurably diluted. Analyzing the significance of disparate campaign contributions, Bell County Republican Party Chairman at least points us in the direction of the real root evil – she suggests that it means that a few select candidates are tied to a few select contributors "who are seasoned in the political process." I would go further – exorbitant contributions from a couple of well-heeled individuals and corporate giants are not tantamount to broad-based citizen support. And worse, whenever "a few" folks can fund and dictate election campaigns and their outcome for "rest of us" – well, that's when ordinary citizens like me get the heebie-jeebies _{↳ the}

Sincerely,


John P. Galligan