

Prepared speech delivered to Williamson County Commissioners Court,  
April 19, 2016

My name is Joseph Gale. I am the Executive Director of the Texas Association for Children and Families, and I have some documents to present to you today, on behalf of TACF, and some of the families we have been assisting.

As you know, we have reached out to you on several occasions for assistance, both in person and by email, as have several of the victim families.

On January 11th, 2016, we received a letter from Judge Dan Gattis stating that there is no way for you to assist us. You received a communication in which it was explained to you that you could assist the children and families being harmed by creating a Domestic Relations office as Travis County has done to stop Travis County families from falling victim to any extortion.

On February 23rd, 2016, Ms. Birkman addressed us directly and reiterated that she could not help us. She stated that she had read all of the emails from the families, and she said we could all go and file complaints with licensing boards. This demonstrated that she had not actually read all of the emails, or she would have seen that some of the families are under gag orders and motions to enjoin by the courts barring them from filing any complaints, and they could actually be jailed for civil contempt for doing so.

We need a credible response from you on this matter. Too many children are currently in danger, or have been damaged, and this continues to happen while you take no action. Our desire is not to enter into litigation and I can attest to the character of all of the families we assist and say that money is not the motive. These families care for their neighbors and have vowed to do their part to make sure the extortion racket that bankrupted them and harmed their kids, doesn't happen to a single other child in Williamson County.

Right now, we are the only group out there working to assist your

citizens and to protect them. We want you to join us, because there is nothing more important than protecting the safety of these families. Your policies damage the very people that support this county, and that needs to change.

I am here today to present you with a demand letter from our organization as well as 5 additional demand letters from some of the families that were damaged by your failure to supervise. There are other families we are assisting that are not represented here due to their fear of being retaliated against by the individuals who are holding visitation with their children at ransom.

This is not a situation where a group of disgruntled litigants are trying to change their court outcomes. There are many families where BOTH parties to the family court action have reconciled and shared their internal communications with those into whom we are seeking your help in requesting an investigation.

The Travis County district attorney's office has offered our group the ability to present any evidence of criminal activity in Travis County directly to the grand jury. The Williamson County district attorney has not returned our emails about a request for same in Williamson County. I urge you to work with our organization to bring justice to these families, by assisting us in breaking down whatever systemic or policy barriers exist in Williamson County that would cause these crimes to persist, and your D.A.'s office to refuse to receive our evidence. And if you devote some attention to this matter finally, I have no doubt you will see that your hands are not tied as you claim. If they are, new laws and policies need to be created immediately, because this County as it stands is not safe for its citizens.