

## Sept 28 2005 - DELAY FACT CHECK #1

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Tom DeLay & Ronnie Earle

MYTH:

Tom DeLay statement from moments ago: "He (District Attorney Ronnie Earle) is an unabashed partisan zealot."

FACT:

Ronnie Earle is independent, cautious, and has prosecuted four times as many Democrats as Republicans.

# of GOP Politicians District Attorney Earle has previously prosecuted: 3

# of DEM Politicians District Attorney Earle has previously prosecuted: 12

These elected officials include, but are not limited to, former Texas Treasurer Warren G Harding (D), former Texas House Speaker Gib Lewis (D), former Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox (D), and even HIMSELF. To say that his motives are political in nature is simply not true and unsupported by fact.

**EARLE HAS PROSECUTED FOUR TIMES AS MANY DEMOCRATS AS REPUBLICANS:** "Over Earle's 27-year tenure, his Public Integrity Unit has prosecuted 15 elected officials, including 12 Democrats." [Los Angeles Times, 5/15/05]

**EARLE PROSECUTED DEMOCRATS AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF STATE GOVERNMENT:** "Some of the Democrats prosecuted by Earle and his Public Integrity Unit are former Texas House Speaker Gib Lewis, former Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox, former State Treasurer Warren Harding and former Texas Supreme Court Justice Don Yarbrough." [AP, 12/12/04]

**EARLE AIDES WENT ON TO RUN FOR OFFICE AS REPUBLICANS:** "Some of his top assistants have been with him for decades. A few have gone on to run for elected office as Republicans." [Los Angeles Times, 5/15/05]

**FRIEND OF OFFICIAL TARGETED BY EARLE CALLED HIM A 'BOY SCOUT':** "Democrats, for their part, are still upset over the prosecution of Attorney General Jim Mattox for bribery in 1985. ... He was acquitted and years later, Jim Marston, a civil lawyer in Austin and friend of Mr. Mattox, asked Earle why he went ahead with the questionable case. 'I said, 'Ronnie, how can it be an abuse of power to threaten a lawyer? We threaten each other all the time.' He told me that elected officials are held to a higher standard. They are supposed to be [above suspicion] like Caesar's wife.' It was then that Mr. Marston realized how deep Earle's principles run. 'Ronnie Earle is a Boy Scout who is offended by wrongdoings, chief among them, public officials' abuse of power.' [Christian Science Monitor, 12/03/04]

**EARLE HAS REPUTATION AS PRINCIPLED, 'OVERLY CAUTIOUS':** "Deliberate in the capital cases he sends to juries, Earle is well known for examining an issue from all angles before acting. 'If I have any complaint about Ronnie, it's that he is overly cautious about who he prosecutes,' says Marston. 'The fact that it has taken two years to investigate Tom DeLay is a sign not of partisanship, but of being completely careful.'" [Christian Science Monitor, 12/03/04]

**EARLE HAS REPUTATION FOR 'STRONG MORAL STREAK':** "[T]o those who know him, Earle has always exhibited a strong moral streak - from his formative years growing up in a small town outside Fort Worth, to his time on the Austin night court, to his political service in the state legislature. But they contend his morality is tempered by his compassion. 'Ronnie is very principled and will do the right thing even if it isn't the smartest political thing to do,' says Ellen Halbert, a victim's rights advocate." [Christian Science Monitor, 12/03/04]

**EARLE HAS REPUTATION FOR RESPECTING THE RULES:** "'One of the things I admired most about Ronnie was his indefatigable ability to go and meet with groups all over town all the time-right-wing groups, left-wing groups, the Rotary,' says Bill Reid, an attorney who retired from Earle's office in 1997. 'He's not a bloodthirsty prosecutor who wanted to get notches on his gun. There are some who have a reputation for walking close to the line in terms of evidence and rights, but there was never a push or inclination from him that we ought to bend the rules. Working for him, I was doing what I wanted to do, and I could go home and sleep at night.'" [Los Angeles Times, 5/15/05]

HOUSTON CHRONICLE: ALLEGATIONS OF PARTISTANSHIP NOT SUPPORTED BY FACTS: Chronicle editorial:  
"The record does not support allegations that Earle is prone to partisan witch hunts." [6/14/04]