



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Says George P. Bush Has Overreached in His Role as Land Commissioner, Expresses Disappointment

A court date has been set for February 22 to determine ownership of the disputed items in the Daughters' Library Collection.

Following their 106-year custodianship of the Alamo, the Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT) are preparing for an early 2016 court date to block Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush's efforts to claim ownership of the DRT's private library collection. The collection which includes books, maps and other artifacts from the state's earliest days has been assembled and managed by the Daughters since the 1950s. The GLO's actions have been considered by some as a taking of private property by the government. The Daughter's transitioned custodianship of the Alamo mission to the state in July of this year.

"We're puzzled by George P. Bush's actions during his first year in office. What appeared to have been a promising career seems to be at risk due to bad judgment and his overreach in an attempt to generate publicity. We're curious as to who is advising him on his management of the state's land office, if anyone."

"In addition to his efforts to claim ownership of the Daughters' private library collection, he's been criticized for being away from the office to campaign and for firing GLO staff in order to make what some have characterized as political hires. It's just disappointing, and it fuels further erosion of the public's confidence in its leaders."

The origins of the DRT Library and the 38,000-piece collection began in 1945 with an individual donation of a number of historic artifacts linked to the early days of the Republic of Texas. When the state refused to provide funding to house and maintain the collection, DRT members helped raise private funds for the construction of the current library building located on the Alamo grounds. The construction was completed in the early 1950s. Since that time, the DRT Library, which contains the largest portion of the DRT's collection, has allowed historians, authors and others interested in Texas history the opportunity to conduct research on the Alamo grounds.

On March 23, 2015, the DRT filed a lawsuit in the 407th District Court in Bexar County to block the GLO's move to take ownership of the DRT Library Collection.



Upon staking its claim to the collection contents, the GLO ordered DRT staff to cancel appointments and close the library on weekends. The GLO then informed the DRT Library staff that they would be required to become state employees, and then, on August 24, locked them out of the library when they refused to do so. In response to the lockout, the DRT obtained a temporary restraining order (TRO) against the GLO to restore the DRT staff's access to the library later in the day.

DRT staff, having regained entry into the library due to the TRO, found a state IT contractor attempting to download potentially copyrighted material onto an external hard drive from the library staff's DRT-owned computers. The computers were password-protected and the IT contractor had apparently hacked into them to gain access.

On September 22, a Bexar County district judge converted the TRO to a temporary injunction, ensuring the DRT access to the library and the collection until the ownership dispute is resolved. The court has set a trial date of February 22, 2016, for the DRT's legal challenge to the state's ownership claims.

Meanwhile, the state's archivist community has come out in support of the Daughters. Leading academics, archivists and others have gone on record criticizing efforts by the GLO to claim ownership of part of the historical collection. Many are concerned that the GLO's posturing will lead to a splitting up of the collection, resulting in it being moved from the Alamo grounds. Among those who have rallied behind the DRT is former Texas state archivist David B. Gracy II, who said the state agency doesn't have the expertise to manage the archives.

Conversely, academics and researchers have praised the DRT for its management and preservation of the collection.

"This fight doesn't have to happen," said DRT President Betty Edwards. "We sincerely hope for an amicable and reasonable resolution to this dispute. We would love to see the collection remain intact and for researchers to continue to experience the historical significance that comes from visiting the Alamo grounds."

For information about the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, visit <http://www.drinfo.org/>.

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The Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT) was founded in 1891 as an organization dedicated to perpetuating the memory of the founding families and soldiers of the Republic of Texas. The organization's mission includes perpetuating the memory and spirit of the men and women who have achieved and maintained the independence of Texas and encouraging historical research into the earliest records of Texas, especially those relating to the Revolution of 1835 and the events which followed.