

TX Governor accused of conflict of interest in vaccination order

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Perry

Texas Governor Rick Perry's ties to the manufacturer of an HPV vaccine are being scrutinized in the wake of his order that all sixth-grade girls in the Lone Star State receive the medication against the sexually transmitted virus that causes cervical cancer.

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The head of a Texas pro-family group believes "corruption" is behind Governor Rick Perry's plan requiring all schoolgirls entering sixth grade to get vaccinated against the Human Papilloma Virus.

On Friday Governor Perry issued an executive order requiring all sixth-grade girls to get Gardasil, Merck and Company's new vaccine against HPV, beginning the fall of 2008. Perry reportedly has extensive ties to Merck, and received \$6,000 from Merck's political action committee during his re-election campaign.

[Texas Eagle Forum](#) president Cathie Adams believes "corruption" is at play. Adams explains that Governor Perry's former chief of staff, Mike Toomey, is now a lobbyist for Merck, the manufacturer of the vaccine.

"Not only that," continues the family advocate, "his current chief of staff is the daughter-in-law of the chairman of the health committee in the State House of Texas -- and she's also a member of Women in Government." Adams describes that group as a "Merck-supported, -funded, and -organized group of legislators."

Adams says what is most remarkable about the situation is that Perry is "usurping" the rights of parents and the Legislature when there is no cervical cancer crisis in Texas.

According to *Associated Press*, Merck could generate billions in sales if Gardasil were made mandatory across the country. The three-shot regimen, which is covered by most insurance companies, costs \$360.

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