



## Foster: Price fought to control Bail Bond Board

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Posted on June 29, 2011 at 10:00 PM

Updated Thursday, Jun 30 at 12:28 AM

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DALLAS — Critics of embattled Commissioner John Wiley Price are questioning his power over the bail bond business in Dallas County.

Eleven people sit on the regulatory Bail Bond Board; Price is one of them.

On Tuesday, News 8 reported that Price purchased land from one of the bondsmen he regulates, a deal some experts call "ethically questionable."

Now, a longtime political rival is questioning Price for doing "whatever it takes" to stay in control of that board.

On Riverfront Drive, there are lots of buildings connected to the bail bond business, but none more important than the County Courthouse, where the powerful Bail Bond Board holds its monthly meetings.

"It makes the board in complete control of the bail bond industry," said former Dallas County Judge Jim Foster, a bitter political rival of John Wiley Price.

In 2009, Foster was concerned that Price had grown too powerful on the board, and since board members are appointed by county officials, Foster removed Price from the board and appointed himself.

"I thought we needed more transparency to that board, and I believed that was the way to do it," Foster said.

How long did it take Price to get his way back onto the board?

"About one hour," Foster said. "To him, that board is very, very, very important ... he would do whatever it takes — or whatever is necessary — to sit on that board."

Price was re-appointed by County Clerk John Warren, which is his option to do.

Warren declined an on-camera interview, but said he was not pleased with his previous board representative, so he approached Price and asked him to serve.

On Tuesday, News 8 reported that Price purchased two Oak Cliff properties for a combined \$80,000 from attorney Bill Knox.

Knox writes more bonds than anyone in the county, but he told News 8 he didn't know Price sits on the Bail Bond Board.

"There's not anyone in the bail bond business in Dallas County that does not know that John Wiley Price sits on that Bail Bond Board — period," Foster said, adding this question: "Why do you fight tooth and nail to sit on a particular board? That would be the red flag."

Price's attorney said he is not aware of any issues related to Price and the Bail Bond Board.

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