



# Texas Home School Coalition ASSOCIATION

*Dedicated to Serving and Protecting the Home School Community of Texas*  
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August 7, 2007

Chief of Police Jeff Creager  
Slaton Police Department  
175 N. 8<sup>th</sup> St.  
Slaton, TX 79364

Dear Chief Creager:

By way of introduction, let me state that the Texas Home School Coalition Association is a statewide organization of home educators with over 60,000 home school families on our mailing list. Our mission is to serve the home school community and protect the right of parents to teach their children at home.

I am writing in response to the actions of Sgt. Rick Lewis, of your department, in an incident on July 10, 2007, in which he facilitated the unlawful entry into the home of Mr. and Mrs. L\_\_\_\_ M\_\_\_\_, a home school family in Slaton. According to this family, Sgt. Lewis appeared at their home when Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ declined to allow CPS workers into her home without a court order. First, two caseworkers told Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ that they were with CPS, that allegations had been made, and they needed to come into her home. Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ declined to allow them entry into her home. They then told her that the allegation was that her home was unsanitary, not safe and her children were in danger and they must come into her home. Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ asked for the specific allegations, and the women responded that an emergency report had been made that cat feces were all over her home, the children had ring worm, which had not been treated, and that no food was in the home.

While Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ had this conversation with these women, her children were with her on the front porch of her home and were obviously not in danger. The women asked for her name and social security number and continued to insist that they be allowed to have immediate entry into the home. Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ told the caseworkers that she needed to call her husband and went into her home to do so. Her husband left his place of employment to come home, telling his wife he would be there in thirty minutes.

Before Mr. M\_\_\_\_ arrived, Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ responded to a loud banging on her door to find Sgt. Lewis with his hand on the top of the door frame and shoulder against the door frame leaning inside the door opening. According to Mrs. M\_\_\_\_, Officer Lewis stated to her that the CPS officials were there to investigate her home and that if she interfered in any way he would arrest her. Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ responded that she had called her husband and that he was on his way home and asked them to wait outside until he arrived. The caseworker responded at that point that they "had to come in now."

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Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ replied that her husband had told her not to let them into the home until he arrived, and he would speak to them. Sgt. Lewis stated emphatically that if she did not let them in immediately, he would arrest her, and at that point, the caseworker pushed her way into the home followed by three other CPS workers and Sgt. Lewis.

Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ and her children were interrogated and the children photographed, and Mr. M\_\_\_\_ was also questioned when he arrived. The home was inspected, including the cupboards and refrigerator. Mr. and Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ received a letter, dated July 17, 2007, informing them that the allegations of medical neglect against Mr. M\_\_\_\_ and physical neglect against Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ had been “ruled out” and the case had been closed.

Chief Creager, a CPS investigation does not give law enforcement officers or CPS caseworkers authority to violate the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment rights of Texas citizens. Texas statute requires CPS workers to receive training on these rights of citizens, to prevent such violations, and I assume that your officers have received such training as well and know the law. Sgt. Lewis clearly used his office and the threat of arrest to facilitate CPS caseworkers’ unlawful entry into this family’s home in spite of their protest—all with no court order.

An investigation into this situation by your department and the City of Slaton is warranted, and appropriate disciplinary actions for this raw abuse of power should be taken to avoid such violations in the future. The family may also seek legal action against Sgt. Lewis and the City of Slaton as a result of these actions.

Sincerely,



Tim Lambert

cc: Mr. and Mrs. L\_\_\_\_ M\_\_\_\_; Mr. Don Kendrick, Mayor; Mr. Coy Evans, City Council; Ms. Laura Lynn Wilson, City Council; Mr. Gene Robinson, City Council; Mr. James Tucker, City Council ; State Senator Robert Duncan; State Representative Delwin Jones; State Representative Carl Isett; Texas home schoolers