You have to decide for yourself. I believe if someone is elected to office they have to be trustworthy, and accountable to their voters, not special interest groups.

Why do I have those concerns?

House Republican Caucus rules call for selection of a "Speaker Designate" to be chosen a year and a half before the actual election of the "Speaker of the House" on the House floor. A discussion of that rule is not the subject of this web-site.

Three individuals became candidates for the position, George Faught, Jeff Hickman, and T.W. Shannon. Each began working with their supporters to win the election. In the midst of the process Dan Boren determined that he was not going to run for re-election to Congress. This caused Faught to withdraw from the Designate race in order to run for Boren's congressional seat.

With the race down to two known candidates, it became much more heated. The most ardent supporters began working to gather the necessary number of votes. With 69 members of the caucus it would take 35 commitments to insure that one of the two individuals won. Because of an anomaly in the rules you only needed a majority of the people voting, not a majority of the members of the caucus, to win the election, so less than a majority could elect the Designate, but 35 had to be the goal since you might not know in advance if people would not be attending.

As the numbers committed to each candidate hardened, it became very obvious that it was going to be a close race. This was certain when Shannon called me and two other representatives for the first time. I agreed to meet with him and we discussed his candidacy. He discussed his "leadership" style and why I should support him.

Believing it was a close race I carefully compiled a list of members and who they appeared to be supporting. By asking members, their supporters and others that claimed they had been told first hand who someone was committed to, I felt it was a very accurate list.

My list had 31 people in the Hickman camp, 32 people in the Shannon camp and 6 individuals that could not be listed in either camp. Of the six I knew 5 personally would not commit to either individual, and the other 1 was known to never have committed to any individual and stated on numerous occasions that he never would tell who he would support.

During our meeting Shannon stated that he had at least 41 commitments but wanted to reach out to everyone and get them on board. I provided a copy of the list to him and asked if he would please clarify where my list was mistaken. Shannon could not explain the discrepancy.

I specifically asked if he thought serving as the Speaker of the House might detrimental on his rumored run for Congress. I asked this question only to confirm that he desired to run for Congress. He said that he knew it could have a negative impact, but had discussed it with others and decided it ultimately would be advantageous.

On the Saturday evening before the designate election Hickman called for the first time. We had a brief cordial conversation. He asked for my support, said also stated he had enough commitments to win, but said he expected it would be close.

Shannon contacted me again and we met once more the day before the election. This was a sign that he did not have the necessary commitments, despite his statements to the contrary. One thing was certain. Both could not have the necessary commitments and I didn't believe either did. The election would prove that at least one of the candidates had a problem with the truth, and possibly both. It is possible to argue that they were being deceived by someone so it wasn't their fault, but that is no excuse.

I decided to prove my theory by placing my name in nomination for the designate position. If I received only one vote and the others were divided evenly (34-34) the race would have to go to a runoff and prove that neither had the commitments they alluded to.

The race did go to a runoff. Neither had a majority of the commitments and Shannon was at least 7 commitments short (34 max vs. what he personally told me he had). That demonstrated to me that his word could not be trusted.

At this point the story might end, but during the race for speaker designate several legislators shared with me that they understood Shannon derived all of his income from the Chickasaw Tribe. A few weeks after the election this rumor had not died down and one representative called to tell me he had specific knowledge, but would not provide it.

As I have done with other rumors, I began to research to see if the rumors could be proven or were totally unfounded. The more I researched, the more it seems that these rumors were true. I began by looking at Ethics Financial Disclosure forms and that led to all of the other research this web-site has documented. Is the information conclusive? No. The only way for it to be conclusive would be for Shannon to provide documents that explain specifically how Shannon Strategies derives its income. This should include providing at least a partial list of customers that Shannon Strategies has worked for and what the work product was.

Why don't you ask him to provide that list? Also ask him to explain how the Chickasaw Tribe was able to give him a $267,000 loan from a program that according to their own web-site does not make loans in the Comanche County.

You might also consider the hundreds of thousands of dollars given by the Chickasaw Tribe to Pacs directed by Shannon, the Speaker’s Ball, and candidates supportive of his election as Speaker.