



February 12, 2013

The Honorable <Member's Name>
<Room> House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515



Dear Congressman <Name>:

Many sectors of the U.S. economy are facing budgetary uncertainties due to the current fiscal crisis and the prospect of related budget sequestration. As Chancellors and Presidents of Texas' institutions of higher education, we ask that you keep in mind the potentially negative impact on colleges and universities in Texas.



There are currently more than 850,000 students enrolled in Texas' four-year degree-granting institutions of higher education, and as our state continues its record growth, the number of college students is expected to continue to increase. These students go on to become important contributors to the Texas economy. Even as Texas colleges and universities are working diligently to become more efficient, this increasing student population puts added pressure on the operation of the state's institutions as traditional revenue support for operating budgets has decreased in recent years.



Many of these students rely upon federal educational programs to attend college. The availability of federal financial aid, work-study programs, and affordable loans often determine whether these students attend college or not. For example, during the 2010-2011 academic year, Texas students qualified for more than \$2.5 billion in Pell Grants alone.



Severe budget cuts could also impact the long-standing ability of higher education institutions to contribute to the robust Texas economy. While educating students is the primary mission of Texas' higher education community, our institutions serve a number of other roles that contribute positively to our State's economic and educational development. For instance, there are nearly 270,000 staff and faculty employed by higher education institutions in Texas. In many cases, our universities and colleges serve as major employers for communities across Texas. Similarly, many Texas colleges and universities are national and global leaders in Research and Development (R&D). In Fiscal Year 2010, for example, the total amount of higher education R&D expenditures in Texas exceeded \$4 billion, with roughly half being Federally-funded. In addition to the clear educational benefits of robust R&D portfolios, the economic opportunities that arise for Texas businesses through technology transfer and commercialization are limitless, and the downstream economic benefits



for Texas communities and our nation are tremendous.

The benefits of a vibrant and sustainable higher education community in Texas merit a high priority in any budgetary discussion. A comprehensive understanding of the impact of across-the-board cuts on Texas higher education is critical. As the debate over our national budget continues, we, the undersigned Chancellors and Presidents of Texas' higher education institutions, urge you to be mindful of the enormous impact that federal programs and agency research budgets have on our state's students, residents, and economy.

With best regards,

Francisco G. Cigarroa, M.D.
Chancellor, The University of Texas System

Kent Hance
Chancellor, Texas Tech University

Lee Jackson
Chancellor, University of North Texas System

Renu Khator
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