



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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2013 A PIVOTAL YEAR FOR TEXAS PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

*Coalition Urges Thoughtful, Principled Consideration in Selecting the
Leadership of Higher Education in Texas*

AUSTIN—The Coalition today announced the launch of a campaign to highlight the vital role that the selection of university regents plays in developing our state’s public higher education system—and by direct extension, in strengthening our state’s economic development and future success. In 2013, Governor Perry will have the opportunity to appoint 17 new regents to our state’s six public higher education systems. Every one of the 60 current sitting regents (including the student regents) has been appointed by Governor Perry.

“The Coalition was formed to promote excellence in our state’s public higher education institutions. That necessarily includes advocating the appointment of regents who have the qualifications, expertise and passion needed to advance quality and responsibly guide our institutions to be ever better,” said Beth Robertson, Founding Member of the Coalition. “The recent governance controversy at the University of Virginia showed how easily the hard-earned reputation of a leading public university can be damaged. Current and future regents should learn from that mistake. We look forward to highlighting the lasting significance and long-term impact that these appointments will have on our state’s students, economy and future.”

The Texas Education Codeⁱ provides a clear mandate of the statutory responsibility of governing boards. Among those responsibilities, each board is expected to preserve institutional independence, enhance the public image of each institution and nurture each institution. In making or confirming appointments, the Governor and Senate are required to ensure each individual has the background and experience suitable for performing those statutory responsibilities. Additionally, leading national experts at the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) have developed principles for board responsibility and the effective stewardship of public educational institutions. The AGB’s “Hallmarks of an Effective Boardⁱⁱ” includes standards such as:

- An effective board understands and respects the vital difference between governing and managing, and it nurtures and supports presidential leadership;
- An effective board observes and imposes the highest ethical standards and avoids even an appearance of conflict of interest;
- An effective board nurtures and enhances the legacy of the institution; and
- An effective board represents and advocates for the institution in the larger community.

The institutions within our university systems are public treasures that the regents have a duty to preserve and enhance for the taxpayers and other stakeholders who have for generations helped build and in which they have invested substantial resources. Based on the expertise of groups like the AGB, the Coalition will encourage the appointment of regents who have a proven record of supporting the fundamental mission of public higher education, are committed to maintaining excellence at our



institutions, and do not have conflicts of interest that inevitably compromise their duty to support our state's institutions.

Regents with terms expiring in 2013 include:

Texas A&M University System

Richard A. Box (February 2013)
Morris E. Foster (February 2013)
James P. Wilson (February 2013)

Texas State University System

William F. Scott (February 2013)

Texas Tech University System

L. Frederick "Rick" Francis (January 2013)
John Field Scovell (January 2013)
Jerry E. Turner (January 2013)

The University of Houston System

Nelda Luce Blair (August 2013)
Jacob M. Monty (August 2013)
Mica Mosbacher (August 2013)
Gage A. Raba (May 2013)

The University of North Texas System

Don A. Buchholz (May 2013)
Gwyn Shea (May 2013)
Jack A. Wall (May 2013)

The University of Texas System

James D. Dannenbaum, P.E. (February 2013)
Paul L. Foster (February 2013)
Printice L. Gary (February 2013)

About the Coalition

The Texas Coalition for Excellence in Higher Education was launched in the summer of 2011 by a group of concerned citizens who believe strongly in the power of higher education to transform lives, build our economy and shape Texas' future. Formed in response to a growing concern over recommendations being floated that could have long-term damaging effects on our institutions of higher learning, the Coalition hopes to advance a thoughtful, constructive and transparent dialogue around higher education in Texas, seeking to improve the quality educational opportunities for all Texans.

***For more information on the Coalition and information on higher education in Texas, please visit:
www.TexasEducationExcellence.org***

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ⁱ Texas Education Code Title 3. Subtitle A. Chapter 51. Subchapter G. Sec. 51.352,
<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.51.htm>

ⁱⁱ From the AGB's publication "Effective Governing Boards: A Guide for Members of Governing Boards of Public Colleges, Universities, and Systems"